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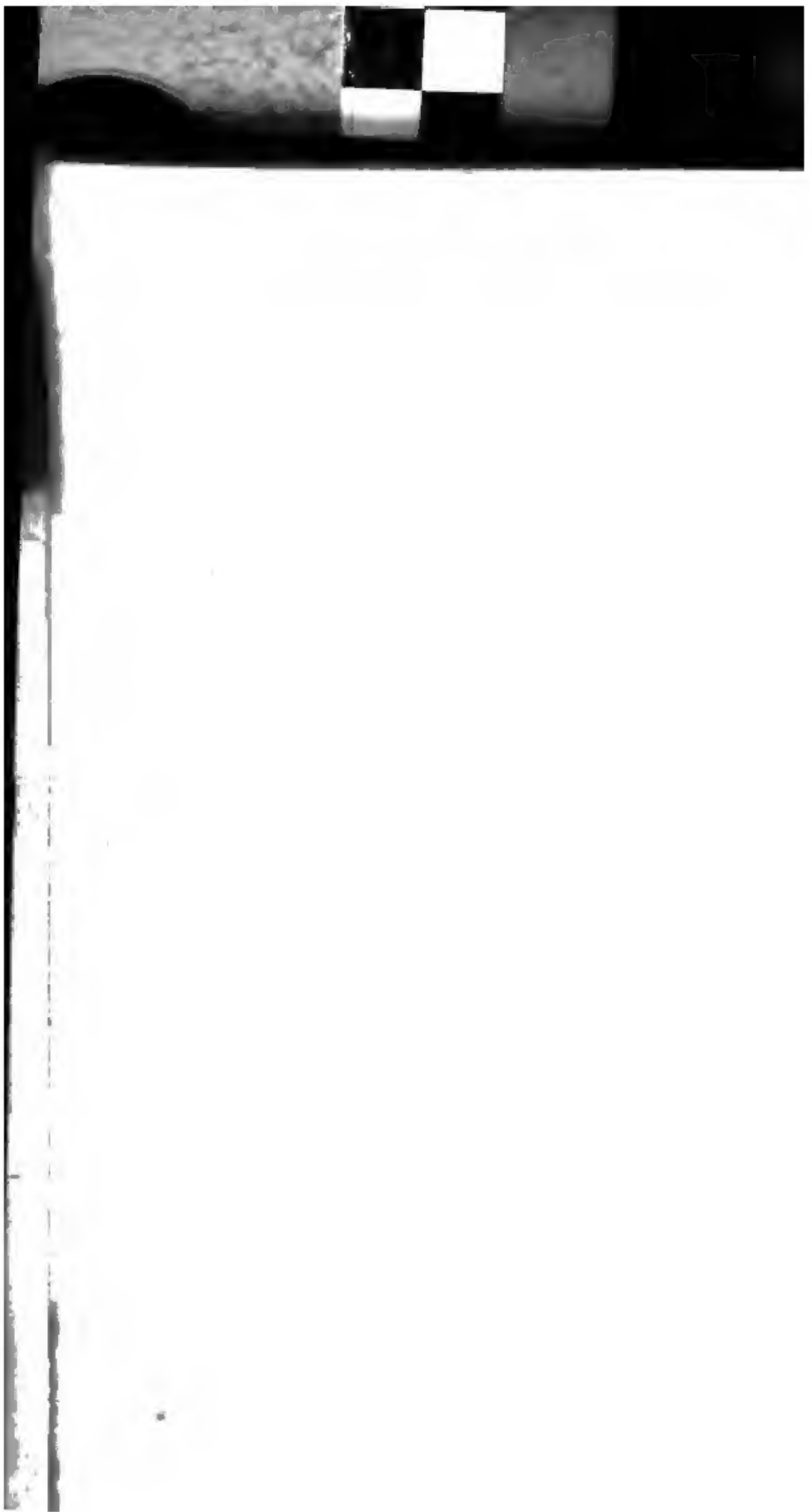




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JERNINGHAM;

OR,

THE INCONSISTENT MAN.

Man is of dust ; etherial hopes are his,
Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,
Want due consistence.
From this infirmity of mortal kind
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not.

WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER AND CO. CORNHILL,
BOOKSELLERS TO THEIR MAJESTIES.
1836.

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PRINTED BY STEWART AND CO., OLD BAILEY.

TO HIM,

WHO HAS MOST BEFRIENDED ME,

These Volumes

ARE VERY GRATEFULLY

INSCRIBED.



11-11-11

A N A P O L O G Y
FOR THIS BOOK.

HAVING heard that the Prefaces of the present age but seldom rejoice in a reader, I have distinguished this initial chapter by a more novel, and, I hope, more seductive, title. I write an *Apology* for this book, as Plato did for his master Socrates,—as Tertullian did for the Primitive Christians,—as Montaigne did for Raymond de Sebonde,—as Jewel did for the Church of England,—as the ingenious Mr. Colley Cibber did for his own Life, and as Mr. George Chalmers did for his compeers in credulity, who were sagacious enough to be made the dupes of Ireland's Shakspearian forgeries.

I write an Apology for this book, hoping that under such a time-honoured name, the few prefatory observations, which I am now about to hazard, will not be entirely thrown away upon my grave and potent friends—the Public. I have written a work, which, with all its errors, I now submit to be judged by that Public, and were it not that I am somewhat fearful lest the purport of my work might be misunderstood, I should have contented myself with tacitly awaiting my sentence from the chair of criticism. But doubting, nay, almost despairing, of having accomplished the object which I have proposed to myself, and feeling how little a thing it is to be accused of intellectual incapacity, how great a thing even to be suspected of evil intentions, I am induced, lest it should not be sufficiently apparent, to avow the purport of this work ; for I would much rather be thought to have failed in an attempt to do good, than to have brilliantly succeeded in doing evil.

One of the most conspicuous actors in the ensuing history, is an enthusiastic reformer of the Shelley school, who is frequently represented as giving utterance to opinions widely at variance with those which are received by the community at large. He is represented pure, honest, benevolent, and self-denying, having no other object in view than the ultimate happiness of his fellow-men, yet withal an enemy to Institutions, and a seceder from the established faith. I have drawn this character,—and it is with the utmost diffidence that I thus venture to speak of myself,—not because I in any way entertain the opinions which, wisely or unwisely, I have made to issue from the mouth of this ideal personation,—not because I am inimical to establishments, or likely ever to lend any assistance towards the vain attempt of re-organizing society ; but because there is much of intolerance in the world,—little of that charity which “vaunteth not itself,”—little forbearance exercised towards the professors of opposite faiths,—

little of that true Christian benevolence “ which is not hasty to judge, and which requires full evidence before it will condemn,”—which, “ however much soever it may blame the principles of any sect or party, never confounds under one general censure all who belong to that party or sect ; and does not from one wrong opinion infer the subversion of all sound principle.”* In short, I have drawn this character, because I am an enemy to intolerance from whatsoever quarter it may proceed, (and not unfrequently the latitudinarian, who complains of the intolerance of the churchmen, exercises a less measure of toleration towards the very churchmen he condemns,) and because I am of opinion, that every profession may number in its ranks men of unblemished morality,—men pure, upright, benevolent, and self-sacrificing,—that the true spirit of Christianity may, and oftentimes does, exist, where the forms of the Church

* Blair.

are unobserved ; and that——but Lord Bacon has expressed an extreme opinion upon this subject,—an opinion which I would scarcely venture to promulgate upon my own responsibility.

With this impression, whether true or false, I have attempted to delineate, in the ensuing pages, the characters of two good men,—both equally benevolent, though one has the world with him, the other the world against him,—though one is the friend to establishments, a lawyer, and a member of parliament,—the other, an enemy to establishments, deeming that, for the most part, as at present instituted, they are prejudicial to the interests of society. But how different are the events which distinguish the lives of these two good men !

Will it be said, then, that I have attempted in these pages to promulgate noxious opinions ? I trust not. I commenced this preface in a vein

of trifling, which I have been utterly unable to sustain,—the importance of the things treated of forbade it. I intended to have apologized for the execution as well as for the design of this book ; but already I have written so much, that my remaining explanations must be brief: I will confine them to one subject.

In a note to the second chapter of my first volume, I have anticipated an objection, which, it is more than probable, will be made against that portion of my narrative. Let me now anticipate that anticipation. It will be said that I have represented school-boys—

“ Delivering their decisions from the chair
Of forward youth,”

in language as little likely to proceed from such immature speakers, as are the sentiments which it embodies. I feel that, if I were disposed to do so, I might make out a case in my favour, and

convince the reader, against his will, that I have not offended against nature so grossly as he supposes in these colloquies. I might tell him what Pascal was in his young days,—what Chatterton, what the admirable Crichton; the latter of whom lived but two-and-twenty years on the earth, and the former scarcely eighteen. I might tell him that Percy Shelley was only seventeen when he was expelled from the University, for having written an atheistical dissertation “Upon the being of a God,” and that Coleridge, when nothing but a blue-coat boy, would expatiate, for hours together, upon the mysteries of the Platonic Philosophy.* I might tell him that what I have written is not

* “How have I seen the casual passer through the cloisters stand still, intranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the speech and the garb of the young Miranda) to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Iamblichus or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar,—while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the inspired charity-boy !”

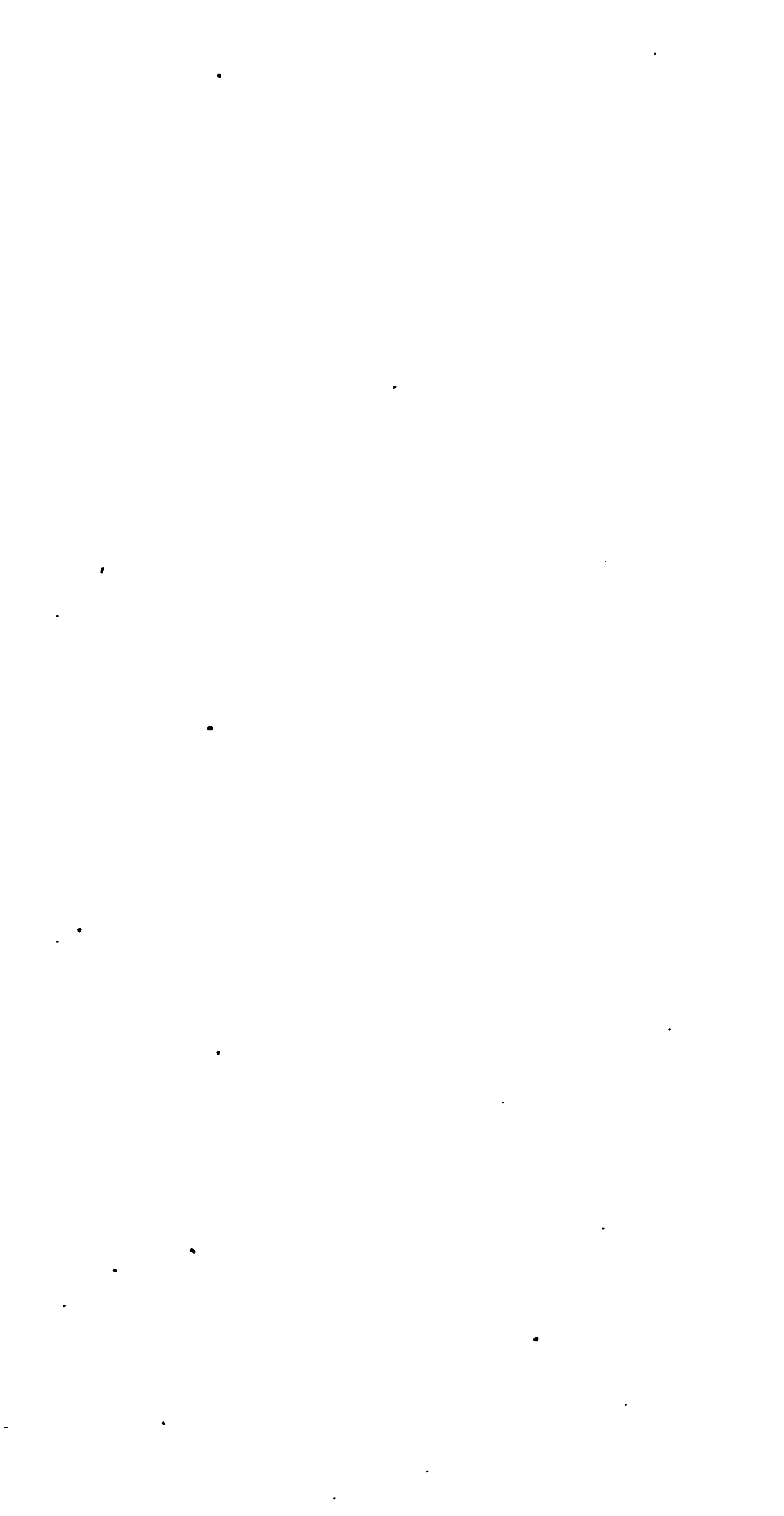
CHARLES LAMB.

altogether at variance with my own knowledge of facts,—that I myself, upon the theatre of boyhood, have met with more than one youthful thinker, whose glowing periods, I should be proud to see recorded in my maturer pages. But all this would be of no avail, if the reader is once impressed with an idea that the author has offended against nature.

That school-boys are but too prone to discuss subjects of grave importance, few who have been to school will deny,—that, in these discussions, they are apt to talk a great deal of nonsense, I very readily admit. Well do I remember certain class-fellows of mine who were wont to indulge with me in weighty theological speculations,—amongst which the mysteries of Swedenborgianism was one of the most prominent. It was attempted by one, who had himself become a convert to the faith of old Emanuel, to make a proselyte of me ;

but it was a failure,—I was too *High Church* for the Swedenborgian.

As I find that I am growing egotistical, I shall conclude with this exhortation to the reader ; “Shouldst thou think that any of the events recorded in this history are improbable, be sure that they are true ; and shouldst thou think that any of my characters are unnatural, be sure that they are drawn from the life.” “Truth is strange, stranger than fiction.”



JERNINGHAM.

CHAPTER I.

. . . My uncle wept,
And pitied me, and kindly kissed my cheek,
Bade me rely on him as on my father,
And he would love me dearly as his child.

SHAKESPEARE.

What a thing this brother is !—

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

I AM not a native of this terrestrial globe, for I was born in the city of Benares ; and the Brahmins, who are a very wise people, have declared that highly-gifted spot to constitute no portion of this elementary world ; an assertion, the accuracy of which I am, in no wise, inclined to dispute, for I somewhat enjoy the idea of having been born in an extra-mundane habitation.

My name is Claude Jerningham. My father was a civilian in the service of the Honourable United Company of merchants trading to the East Indies. The ingenious Mr. Henry Fielding, in that very admirable book of travels, entitled "A Journey from this World to the Next," has informed us that he fell in with an individual, upon the high-road to this upper earth, destined to enjoy a fortune of 100,000*l.*, and the character of a wise man. I have every reason to suppose that this gentleman was my father.

Of my mother I know little. Few people who are born in India know very much about their mothers, and I was not one of the few. I take it for granted that she was an adventuress,—a damsel-errant ere she became the wife of my father; but the birth and parentage of this excellent woman I never thought fit to investigate; and such of my readers as have perused Swift's story of "Strephon and Cælia," will understand why I did not.

A brother, by name Frederick, anticipated my claim to the rights of primogeniture. I know not exactly how it happened that we were never, at any season of our lives, very remarkable for fraternal affection. Eteocles and Polynices were but types of us; we battled it out so manfully.

Of my first sojourn in Hindustan I recollect

very little : for I was not quite five years old when my brother Frederick and myself were consigned to my father's agent at Calcutta, to be shipped for England, by the first vessel, under cover to my uncle, Matthew Jerningham, barrister of the — Temple.

In like manner has my remembrance of the voyage home almost wholly evaporated. The wife of the ship's steward was our ostensible guardian during the passage ; she was a woman of a placid disposition, and contented herself with utterly neglecting us, and stealing two-thirds of our wardrobe. My great ally was the boatswain ; but Frederick (for he was a sly boy) clave to the cook and the butcher. The hot pastry of the one and the new milk of the other, were the magnetic powers which attracted the needle of my brother's affection. As for myself, I was quite happy when blowing the boatswain's whistle, and piping all hands to grog.

Montaigne's "three most excellent men," were Homer, Epaminondas, and Alexander the Great. If my uncle had lived in the old time, he would certainly have been one of this triad, to the exclusion,—I know not of whom, but I think, most likely, of the Macedonian. He was, indeed, a most excellent specimen of humanity in its highest state of perfection. "Nature went about some

full work, she did more than make a man when she made him."* He was the very soul of wisdom and benevolence, just such an one as would have found his way into the heart and pages of Isaac Walton, whose pen, saith a kindred spirit of our own times, dropped from an "angel's wing."† A meet companion would my uncle have been for Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Sanderson, and Herbert.

He was the elder brother of my father, and he was a widower. His wedded happiness had been unto him as a dream of joy, brief as it was delightful. There was a rose-bud in the garden when my uncle stood at the altar, and ere the leaves of the full-blown flower had fallen withered to the ground, he stood by the grave of his beloved, a bereaved and solitary man. And now he was sore stricken; the world was a wilderness to him, where no flowers blossomed and no sunshine ever entered. Outwardly he was quite calm; at times he was even gay; but his inward reflections were desolate as those of Valerio in the drama.

"Now I have once enjoy'd my sweet Evanthe,
And blest my arms with her most dear embraces,
I have done my journey here; my day is out,
All that the world has else is foolery,
Labour and loss of time; what should I live for?‡

* Ben Johnson.

† Wordsworth.

‡ *Fletcher's Wife for a Month.*

But my uncle did not pause here: he answered this latter question as the question ought to be answered, and his answer was, "To do good." The love which had lately been concentrated into one strongly-burning focus, was now to be diffused over the world; and his heart, from the love of an individual, betook itself to the love of the species. He lived to disseminate the happiness which he was no longer suffered to enjoy; walking upon earth like a blind torch-bearer, upon whose sightless orbs falleth not one grain of the light which he is shedding all around him.

Perhaps, however, I ought not strictly to say that my Uncle Matthew was wretched; for if, as has been asserted by Hartley, and several other wise men, that happiness is inseparable from benevolence, my uncle was abundantly happy. The tranquillity of an un-upbraiding conscience, the will and the power to do good, brotherly love towards all men, and trust in the mercy of God, are blessings which may have rendered him happy, but which never having experienced myself, I do not know how to describe.

My uncle received us upon our arrival with a heart overflowing with kindness. He embraced us as if we had been his own children; he sighed, and a solitary tear on either side rolled down his cheek. Perhaps he remembered that he was him-

self childless, and this called to mind his bereavement.

My uncle, as I have before said, was a barrister; he was a man of some eminence in his calling, universally admired and beloved by all his brethren of the long robe. His wonted residence, owing to the nature of his profession, was in the centre of our great national metropolis; he had been an in-dweller in no other place since the light of his world had gone from him; but now that he was no longer an unconnected man, he ceased to regard his own convenience, and hired for the advantage of Frederick and myself, a country residence on the borders of —— shire, about twelve miles distant from the capital, being of opinion (as who is not?) that the seeds of a healthy constitution are more likely to be derived from the fresh air and the free exercise of the country, than from all the thousand metropolitan exhalations, which my uncle's god-father Mr. Bramble has celebrated in his admirable letters.

The village, wherein our new house was situated, for the sake of perspicuity, I shall call HEATHFIELD. And here I must pause to observe, that implicitly following the heart-breaking advice which a certain crabbed and envious critic once tendered to an ambitious student,—“Whenever you have written a sentence which you think

particularly excellent, be careful, young man, to blot it out,"—I have just expunged from this narrative a couple of my favourite chapters; the one containing the opinions of my uncle upon the all-important subject of Education, and the other unfolding his views of Religion, and showing in what manner he led my brother and myself to a knowledge of the true creed: but there were so many excellent sentences in these two chapters, that I have thought it fit to destroy them at once, because had I blotted out all that I thought good in them, I should have obliterated the whole text.

As we advanced in years, my brother and I desisted not from our unnatural warfare. There seemed to be no more chance of our ever being reconciled than of parallel lines meeting one another, which every mathematician knows they have very little prospect of ever doing. I declare that it was no fault of mine. I stretched forth my hand, but my brother would not take it; I smiled upon him, and he turned aside in disgust; I spoke kindly to him, and he spat upon the ground.

Love and hatred recognize and are bound by no laws. I know not why my brother detested me, unless it was that he looked upon me as an interloper. Perhaps, having been born first, he regarded me as *de trop*, and not contented with

being the eldest, he desired also to be the youngest—the *alpha* and *omega* of the family,—the only one of his parents. Be it so: I neither defrauded him of his birth-right, neither took I away his blessing, nor supplanted him in any one thing but the affections of my Uncle Matthew, which I undesignedly appropriated to myself, though God knows, I would have shared them with my brother, had I possessed any control over the gift.

But Frederick was a sly boy, and he did all that he could to circumvent me, but with very indifferent success; for, as Shakspeare (than whom if I knew any better authority, I should quote it in this place) has observed in one of his inimitable tragedies,—

“ The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices,
Make instruments to scourge us—”

a quotation, the aptitude of which will immediately become evident, when I say that the very means which Frederick employed to worm himself into the good graces of my uncle, damned him most entirely in the estimation of that discriminating gentleman.

My brother was of a puritanical complexion, or rather he pretended to be so. Had he known how unbecomingly an austere deportment shows itself

in the person of a child, he would not have cast off, as worthless garments, all the natural graces of youth. But he was, at the same time, ignorant and designing; he forgot that the behaviour which adorns the man is disgusting when it characterizes the boy. He thought, by the sobriety of his demeanour and the unrelaxing gravity of his appearance, to establish his superiority over me, and to conciliate the good opinion of my uncle. To laugh, to play, or in any manner to disport himself, was an unseemly infraction of propriety which he scrupulously abstained from committing. He spoke in a low voice; he trod with a monotonous pace; he never deviated from the beaten paths of the strictest regularity, or yielded to any spontaneous excursions. Every thing that he did was premeditated; every word that he uttered passed through the sieve of investigation. He would contrive to be caught by my uncle reading the bible in solitude; and would spend his money upon tracts, which he would leave in all parts of the house, with his name written thereupon. He had the whole book of Proverbs by heart, and would utter more sage reflections than ever did Marcus Antoninus, Solomon, or the philosophical Sancho. Indeed, he was so exceedingly didactic, that every body in the village wondered how such great wisdom could have got into so little a head.

But my uncle was not to be played upon. He saw at once that Frederick was a designer; but had he, on the other hand, confided in the genuineness of his elder nephew's behaviour, he would not have applauded the boy for conduct which, to say the least of it, was unnatural and unbecoming. My brother outwitted himself, and saw, to his inexpressible chagrin, that I, who took no trouble in the least to ingratiate myself with any living creature, was the favourite, not only of my uncle, but of every one who entered the house.

And here, before I proceed any farther, I must congratulate myself that, not being engaged upon either a tragedy or a comedy, I am bound by no dramatic proprieties of time or place in this work; so that, if I should purpose (as I have done) to transport the reader from Asia to Europe, "or to speak, though I am here, of Peru, and in speech digress from that to a description of Calicut,"* I am perfectly justified in so doing, by all the laws of historical composition. In like manner, with regard to unity of time, I may pass over as many years as I please, whenever it suits my convenience, making some half dozen words describe so many revolutions of the earth, a liberty which I

* Sir Philip Sydney's *Defence of Poesie*.

intend to take here, requesting the courteous reader to imagine nine years to have expired since the autobiographer and his brother left behind them the shores of Hindustan, the progress of which time will have brought me to my fourteenth year,—a statement which I make in this place to save the reader from the trouble of a calculation.

At this period my uncle began to think about sending his nephews to school. Some parents and guardians would have dismissed us many years earlier; but Mr. Jerningham was not friendly to the system, which has so much obtained in late years, of teaching children to read a strange language before they are acquainted with their own; and he thought that the Eton Latin Grammar was at best but an indifferent horn-book. Whether he was right or not, I will not take upon me to determine; but, leaving such weighty speculations to much wiser people than myself, I will adhere to the matter of this history.

There is a popular prejudice against schoolmasters. A certain eminent living* philosopher has compared them to 'chimney-sweepers' and 'scavengers.' God forbid! I am certain that the individual, who presided over my education, bore no very striking resemblance to the gentlemen of

* Written in 1835.

the soot-bag or the dust-cart. He was an elegant scholar, and a worthy man; too wise to be a pedant, and too good to be a tyrant. If I had a decemviri of sons, Dr. R. should educate every one of them.

I rejoiced when my uncle spoke of school; and hope smiled pleasantly upon me. The reason of this I will explain, lest my feelings should be misinterpreted. Kind as was my Uncle Matthew, and considerate as he was in all his arrangements, I was, nevertheless, in the moral sense of these words, a solitary and companionless being. I had servants to attend upon me, masters to instruct me, a pony to ride upon, and free access to almost every house in the neighbourhood. I had books in abundance, I had multiform instruments of amusement; I had many and pleasant acquaintance, but *I had no friend*. My heart had long been yearning for one who could sympathize with, and understand, me;—a creature, to whom I might unburthen my soul, and pour out my imaginings in his presence, like water, from the deep well of my heart. My bosom laboured with a weight of uncommunicated thoughts,—of feelings too long pent up, which now were growing stagnant and unwholesome, “creaming and mantling like a standing pond,” and diffusing throughout my soul a moral contagion, noxious, offensive, and deso-

lating. I had long been dreaming of a friend ; in the solitude of my past life, I had pictured to myself an ideal companion, and indulged in a visionary hope that, some day, such a blessing might be granted to me. I fancied that nothing could be more delightful than that beautiful "communion of souls" which I had read of in books, but which I knew not ; and my poor heart eagerly panted for something that it might twine itself around, which it might embrace, and be embraced by in turn, receiving and communicating happiness. Such an union I looked for in vain at home, so I turned my thoughts inquiringly abroad.

CHAPTER II.

“ A jewel, my Amethus, a fair youth,
A youth, whom, if I were but superstitious,
I should account an excellence more high
Than mere creations are ; to add delight,
I'll tell you how I found him.”

FORD'S *Lovers' Melancholy*.

IF the reader will transport his imagination to a large, yet comfortable-looking school-room, with ground-glass windows, white-washed walls, and an open sky-light in the ceiling, he may there see in his “mind's eye” the author of this autobiography traversing the carpetless floor, and looking the very picture of desolation. Alone, in the centre of a crowd, cold, weary, and strange, I knew not what was best to be done. I felt like a raw criminal, when he enters for the first time the common cell of a populous prison,—when all the old inmates of the dungeon crowd around the

unfortunate novice, helping, by their impertinent curiosity, to make the uneasiness of his situation a hundred times more galling than the wisdom of a merciful legislature has ever intended it to be.

I was about fourteen years of age when I entered Dr. R——'s establishment; tall, active, and, as nearly as can be, half-way between beauty and deformity. My inclinations were not pugnacious; at all times preferring peace to war, I would never fight for the pleasure of the thing, though I had stout notions upon the score of retaliation, and was not to be offended with impunity. In short, that I may not dwell too long upon my own qualities, I had some good ingredients in my composition, which were neutralized by a great many bad ones; but, amongst my school-fellows, who did not analyze my character, I was spoken of by the reading few as "a cleverish fellow enough," and by the rest as "a good sort of chap;" which means that I could take a flogging kindly, play at cricket with tolerable adroitness, lend money to a friend in distress, and climb over the walls of the play-ground.

Of my brother I am desirous of saying little, where his history is not mixed up with my own. I wish that he had never lived, or, living, that I had never known him. He was much better looking than myself, and, at the same time, much

more talented. Indeed, he very narrowly escaped being both a beauty and a genius; but he had no heart; therein was it that he faulted. His evil disposition marred the loveliness of his countenance, and rendered his intellect but a curse to him. "The pity of it;—oh! Iago, the pity of it!"

I walked up and down the school-room, restless and uneasy as I was; anxious to escape into solitude, yet knowing that such an escape was impossible. On every side I beheld cold and unfeeling faces staring at me with the most insolent assurance. The strangeness of my situation cowed me, though I knew that it would soon wear away; but my brother seemed perfectly unmoved;—he was without delicacy and shyness; I would have given worlds for the composure he exhibited. He had not been in the school-room half an hour, when I beheld him in conversation with—*the usher*.

I heard voices behind me; two of my new companions were conversing somewhat to this effect:—

"A deuced good-looking fellow, at all events," said the first speaker, "and clever, if we may judge by his looks."

My heart went thump against my side. Did they mean me? No. Did they mean my brother? Very likely.

"Good-looking enough for a girl," said the second speaker, in a voice betokening any thing but effeminacy; "though, for my part, I must candidly confess that I like more masculine beauty."

They mean neither Frederick nor me, thought I; for we were both of us manly-looking boys. Of whom could they be speaking? I felt more at my ease; there was nothing personal in this dialogue.

"What," resumed the first speaker, "did you tell me was the new fellow's name? I believe that I shall soon forget my own. What a confounded memory I have!"

"*New fellow*:" then after all they were talking of Frederick; or, it was just possible, of myself.—There is no accounting for tastes, thought I. My ears tingled, my pulses galloped, and the warm blood mounted upwards to my cheeks.

"EVERARD SINCLAIR; by the Lord, his name is as pretty as his face."

Well, thought I, that is not my name, certainly; and I recovered my self-composure in a moment.

"I wonder what book he is reading," continued one of the speakers; "by Jove, though, he has got a fine pair of eyes:"—and presently they strolled into the play-ground.

“Clever,—good-looking,—fine pair of eyes,—Everard Sinclair,—new fellow, with a book.” Well, thought I, I must cast my eyes around me, and try if they will not light on this paragon. I lifted up my eyes; for the strangeness of my situation, united with a little natural shyness, had kept them fixed, up to this point, with a becoming bashfulness, upon the ground. Curiosity in most young people is a stronger feeling than modesty:—it certainly was so in me; for the conversation which I have just recorded put to flight my constitutional shyness. I raised my eyes, and looked about me; I took a survey of the whole school-room. I presently cried out “Eureka!” for there, in one corner of the room, absorbed in the perusal of a book, and apparently unconscious of the noise and tumult with which he was surrounded, sate a boy of about my own age, whose countenance filled me with admiration, and awakened a sudden love in my breast. He was as unlike as he possibly could be to every other boy in the school. “As a lily among thorns,” was young Sinclair amongst his school-fellows.

His hair was light, silken, and curly; his complexion delicate, and transparent; he had blue eyes, and a figure, though slender in its proportions, replete with the most exquisite grace. The

prevailing expression of his countenance was that of extreme gentleness ; it was something that you felt, rather than saw ; it was the soul speaking out of the face ; it was one of those beautiful aspects which once seen can never be forgotten,—a countenance whose particular features we endeavour in vain to retrace, though the full harmony of their collected loveliness can never pass away from the memory.

“ This is he of whom they spake,” said I, “ the fine-eyed boy, with the book.—What is there that should prevent me from speaking to him ? Is he not, like myself, a stranger in this place ; and is he not,—God grant it,—destined to be my friend ?”

The spirit of prophecy was upon me. I know not how it was, but I saw in prospect a world of happiness and love. “ Yes,” I said, “ it is written,—I am sure of it,—that this boy shall be my friend.”

I went up to him and addressed him. I do not remember what I said ; it was something about our being “ fellow-sufferers.” I concluded, by asking his pardon for having interrupted him in this manner.

Sinclair lifted up his eyes ; a bright smile beamed across his countenance, as he opened his lips and spoke. Very sweet were the tones of

his voice ; they were plaintive but most melodious. Young as the boy seemed to be, it was evident that he had known suffering.

"Nay," he said, "do not ask my pardon; when you have wronged me it will be time to do that. A civil speech needs no apology; on the contrary, it calls for my thanks,"—and he laid his book upon the desk, as though he were willing to continue the dialogue.

As for myself, I was confused. I did not well know what to say. I stammered out something about "custom."

"*Custom*," replied Everard Sinclair, "*custom*—I like not the word. I never regard customs. I wish you had not uttered that word. Custom is the cloak of error; 'the sworn enemy of wisdom and of truth.'"

There is a sentence to have issued from the lips of a boy scarcely fourteen years old ! But I will not be answerable for his precise words ; on my shoulders let their pedantry rest.* I am afraid

* I cannot resist the temptation of inserting a note in this place. Mr. Godwin, the patriarch, and prince of fictitious historians, in his *St. Leon*, makes a poor negro servant talk precisely like a philosopher, and remarks, either in his own person or *St. Leon's*, for the hero telleth his own story, "I am unable, at this distance of time, to recall the defects of his language, and I disdain the mimic task of inventing a jargon for him suit-

that, as I have set them down here, they may appear hard and sententious in the mouth of so youthful a speaker: they did not appear so to me. I thought that in my whole life I had never heard any thing so naturally eloquent.

Everard spoke rather playfully than otherwise: there was nothing of solemnity in his enunciation. Early developed as was his intellect, and unusual as was the wisdom of what he said, there was nothing whatever in his external behaviour which indicated an affectation of manhood, or the slightest shadow of a self-consequential deportment. He had all the ease,—the openness,—the unconscious

able to the lowness of his condition." Is this Mr. Godwin's feeling, or merely the outpouring of the proud and chivalrous St. Leon? If it contain the opinions of the author, is Mr. Godwin right?

He is at all events supported by Dr. Johnson. "Never fear," said that great literary behemoth to Crabbe, the poet, one day, "putting the strongest and best things you can think of into the mouth of your speaker, whatever may be his condition." Was Johnson right? Goldsmith thought otherwise, and he who wrote the *Vicar of Wakefield*, must be admitted as an authority in these matters.

Goldsmith was talking to Sir Joshua Reynolds about writing a fable, wherein little fishes were to be introduced. Johnson overheard him, and laughed. "Why do you laugh?" said Goldsmith; "if you were to write a fable for little fishes, you would make them all speak like big whales." Mr. Godwin makes his little fishes speak like big whales.

grace of boyhood. There was no straining after effect, no ambition to appear wise, no assumption of intellectual superiority. He uttered what was uppermost in his thoughts, entirely regardless of opinion. It had never entered into his heart to conceive that he was in any way better than his fellows; he had never made any comparisons; he was altogether destitute of vanity. But this is anticipating a subject upon which I shall enter more fully anon.

"Shall we walk," said Sinclair, "in the playground, I think they call it? For my part, I cannot help thinking that it is more like the courtyard of a prison. What walls! it is really quite a pity; we shall never see the sun set in this place."

"I think," he continued, "that we shall become friends. I like you already, I do indeed. It was so kind of you to come and speak to me, when I was sitting so drearily in that corner. Nobody has thought of addressing a word to me but yourself."

We strolled into the playground arm-in-arm. The first thing that we saw was a big boy beating a little one. "Look there," said Sinclair, "tyranny even in boyhood! This is a sort of rehearsal of what will be in years to come. *Homo homini lupus*. The strong man persecutes the weak. There is no justice in the world,"—and Everard Sinclair sighed.

The tall tyrant thumped, and the little victim screamed. What was to be done? Everard Sinclair looked sorrowful. "We must not suffer this," he said.

"What can we do?"

"Interfere," said Everard.

I was appalled. Not that I was a coward, but that I was a stranger; and to meddle with the proceedings of an old scholar, seemed to me a most unheard-of impertinence. A newly-elected M. P., upon the first night of taking his seat, scarcely feels himself equal to the task of arraying himself against a practised debater. He likes, first of all, to see how things are carried on in the house. But with Everard, justice was justice; and duty was based upon a firmer foundation than the conventional distinctions of society present to the searcher after truth.

"We must not suffer this; we must not, indeed. See how the little creature writhes under the blows of his brutal oppressor." And Everard Sinclair hurried me towards the place where this martyrdom was acting.

"May I ask," he said, in a voice equally mild and resolute, "what fault this little boy has committed, to merit such severe chastisement?"

"What's that to you?" cried the chastiser; but his arm was stayed: though it had been lifted up, it fell not upon his diminutive victim.

“Every thing in the world,” replied Everard. “When you strike him you strike me. An injury to an individual is an injury to the community. Besides, my heart bleeds when I look upon the sufferings of another. Let me intreat you to spare this poor, little, helpless wretch.”

“And who, the devil, *are* you?” asked the tyrant; and he lifted up his hand to strike.

Everard seized hold of his arm, and the descent of the blow was impeded.

“Ho, ho!” cried the baffled smiter, gnashing his teeth with choler; “you are a precious impertinent fellow. I should like to know who you are. Hands off, sir; hands off, directly. I think that I could thrash *you*.” And the boy clenched his fist with a look of angry derision.

“Do you think that you could thrash us *both*?” said I; for our enemy was older and stronger than either Sinclair or myself.

“Perhaps not,” answered the boy; “but I will call those who can. Here, Evans, be so good as to help me to thrash these green-horns.”

There was a fight, in the middle of which the little victim escaped; but Everard Sinclair and I were well thrashed for our trouble. But it mattered not; for, on the evening of that day, we made a covenant which endured for ever.

CHAPTER III.

——And ere his twentieth year,
He had unlawful thoughts of many things.

COLERIDGE.

My father was very willing to be rid of me; for I could not work, drive the plough, or endure any country labour. My father oft would say I was good for nothing.

LILLY's History of his Life and Times.

EVERARD SINCLAIR was the second son of a wealthy country gentleman in ——shire. He was the youngest, also, and his mother was dead. He was just fourteen years of age. He had been hitherto educated at home, or, rather, he had educated himself; for Mr. Sinclair was one of those people—and there are many such—who despise in others all those qualities which they have not in themselves. He was an egotist, disgustingly inflated with all that hard-featured intolerance which is peculiar, not to the wise, but to the ignorant.

In the fullness of his self-sufficiency, he declared that "he put no stress upon ornamental accomplishments, provided that his sons were on the high road to become useful members of society." By useful Mr. Sinclair meant *wealthy*; he considered himself eminently useful. He gave employment to a number of individuals, and regarded himself as a philanthropist upon a large scale. It was the utmost of this gentleman's ambition that his sons should resemble himself; he desired not that they should be one degree better, and did not well see how they could be. He was the very incarnation of self-complacency; he had not himself been "drilled into the kick-shaws of a classical education. He had done well enough without Latin, and why should not his sons do the same? He did not intend them for school-masters, or parsons either, for the matter of that. Thank God, he could provide for them more respectably.— Education was a good enough thing for people obliged to live by their wits; for his part, he had never felt the want of it; he had got on much better than his neighbours, and was very well to do in the world." And thus reasoning with himself, he set the seal upon the ruin of his sons. Admirable Mr. Sinclair! Thou wouldst have made brutes of us all.

Mr. Sinclair, like most other people, did one

sensible thing in his life. He married a sensible woman, and astonished the whole county. Everybody marvelled at the match: they marvelled from two separate causes; firstly, that the ignorant Mr. Sinclair should have proposed to the accomplished Miss Kenyon; and secondly, that the accomplished Miss Kenyon should have accepted the ignorant Mr. Sinclair. But Miss Kenyon's parents were poor, and Miss Kenyon herself was obedient. A young lady cannot always marry the person she likes best.

Besides, she was of a charitable nature, and did not think so badly, as others did, of the gentleman who was destined to be her husband. He had many good qualities of heart, though he was rough in his manners and sometimes savage in his behaviour. Allowances must be made: he had been improperly educated; he had not received the same advantages as other men. His mind was unstored, but it was not deficient in capacity. He might improve. Then vanity stepped in and mounted upon the shoulders of charity. She might correct him; he was prejudiced against learning, and altogether unambitious of improvement, but her example and her persuasions, might convert him. There were many instances on record of a good wife being the salvation of a bad husband. She was rather pleased when she reflected upon this; she would regene-

rate Mr. Sinclair; she would cultivate his intellect; she would mould him to her will; she did not despair of his redemption.

All this would have been well enough if the event had in any way accorded with the anticipations of this amiable casuist. But it was not so: Miss Kenyon and Mrs. Sinclair were two very different people. She had altogether miscalculated her strength; the husband was obstinately phlegmatic, though the lover had been docile as a child.

They were married; a son was born unto them, an heir to the Sinclair estates. He was a giant, a young Titan, and Mr. Sinclair was proud of the monster. As the boy grew up, he exhibited, fortunately for himself, a remarkable passion for all agricultural affairs. He did not cultivate his mind, but he cultivated the paternal estate. He was a prodigy of strength, an infant Hercules, and Mr. Sinclair clave to the boy. Happy father, indeed, to be blessed with such an excellent son!

A second boy was born unto them, Everard,—delicate in body but vigorous in mind, the darling of his mother, the aversion of Mr. Sinclair, the very antipodes of his elder brother, Charles. His intellect was rapid in its development; it expanded like a beautiful flower, cherished by water

from the fountain of a mother's inexhaustible love.

He advanced in years ; he ceased to be a child ; but still he was the good genius of the house. He was the gentlest, the kindest, the most forgiving of God's creatures. He was full of patience, fortitude, and love. Do what you would to him you could not offend him. He had no thought for himself ; he would have kissed the hand that smote him, and blessed the most bitter of his enemies.

But upon Mr. Sinclair, all these endearing qualities were unfortunately entirely thrown away. This worthy man regarded poor Everard, to use his own expression, as a "born natural." The gentleness of the child's disposition was particularly offensive to Mr. Sinclair. His endurance was called "want of spirit ;" his kindness was "nothing but hypocrisy ;" his charity and affection were "sickly sentimentalities ;" his desire of knowledge and his consequent studiousness were interpreted into physical indolence. "In short," said Mr. Sinclair, "I disown him ; he is no son of mine ; I detest him. He will disgrace both himself and his family ; he has not a day's work in him ; he does not know barley from oats, and says that Virgil was a farmer. He is fit for nothing but a poor scholar. His milky face and his soft speeches turn me sick.

He has never said 'd—n me,' in his life. We shall be able to make nothing of the thing,"—and Mr. Sinclair looked ineffably disgusted.

But Everard, *thing* as he was, waxed daily in genius and kindliness. His was not a fair-weather temper. Neither light breezes nor rough winds could ruffle the waters of his serenity. His father kicked him and called him a natural; his brother thumped him, and called him a girl; but his mother kissed him, and said, "my beloved," and Everard's sufferings were forgotten in the ecstasy of that maternal embrace.

But what could Mrs. Sinclair do? She wept over the persecution of her son; her heart was rent in pieces, for she was powerless; she remonstrated, but it was all in vain. Her exhortations, full of kindness and submission as they were, brought nothing but the harshest replies. Mr. Sinclair was naturally obdurate; of what avail was it to reason with him? You might as well have argued with an *Æthiopian* in the polite language of Tuscany. He was to the last degree impatient of contradiction. To oppose him was only to push him forward; it was like throwing a ball against brick-work; it rebounds even past the thrower. What could poor Mrs. Sinclair do? Every attempt that she made to turn the current of her husband's affection upon Everard was met with the most open hostility.

But this could not last very long. She struggled ; she endured ; she died.

Everard was now left alone in the world. The thread of human sympathy was broken. He betook himself, for consolation, to his books. And the sufferings of Everard Sinclair commenced at that hour.

But was Mr. Sinclair blessed with a library ? He certainly had a few volumes, a scant collection indeed. He had Tusser's *Five Hundred pointes of good Husbandrie* (a reprint of course) : he had a certain erudite work called *Every man his own Farrier* ; then he had *Every man his own Lawyer*, and *Every man his own Every thing*,—notable empiricisms all. A copy of Daniell's Rural sports, a set of Sporting Magazines from the commencement, with the Family Bible and Prayer Book, made up the sum of Mr. Sinclair's *bibliotheca*.

There was nothing, saving the two sacred volumes, for poor Everard there ; but still he had many books to read. His mother, during her life-time, had possessed a small, but a well-selected library. They were, however, exclusively her own ; and when she died, she bequeathed them to Everard. She had nothing else to give the poor boy but her blessing.

What a pity that the blessing should have been accompanied by a curse !

Were the books a curse? Everard thought otherwise. They were to him an inexhaustible treasure. Hitherto there had been a check upon his inclinations; he acknowledged that it was proper, though he felt that it was irksome; but now he was a free agent. Up to this point, he had only been suffered to peruse certain books, and them only at periodical intervals. But now he was entirely at liberty; he ran wild in the wilderness of literature; there was no one to direct his wandering footsteps, and the poor boy was lost in its mazes. A syren voice called to him,—a syren hand beckoned to him, and he followed. He was as one of the children, in the fairy tale, who lost their way in the forest. He saw a light shining from afar off; he mistook it for the cheering light of truth. He went on till he came to the postern; he entered the gates that were open to him, and found himself in the castle of the ogre. That ogre was the monster of infidelity. Did he incarcerate Everard? You shall see.

The first book, after the death of his mother, to which the young student seriously applied himself, was the one, of all others, the most likely to delude a young and enthusiastic understanding,—a work full of eloquent sophistries and plausible untruths, the emptiness of whose arguments is glossed over

by the oratorical fervour of its language. It was Volney's *Ruins of Empires*.

Now, if Everard had been a little older; if the glowing enthusiasm of his temperament had been a little more tempered by judgment; if his understanding had been of a less imaginative and a more logical nature, it is probable that Volney's book might have been perused without any dangerous consequences. But his intellect was precisely in that condition, which is most prone to be deluded and led astray by the plausible,—the eloquent,—the sophistical.

The young student read and was staggered; but very far was he from being convinced. A new light had burst in upon his brain; and many things undreamt of before rose up on the arena of his consciousness. He resolved to inquire more minutely; he was not contented with a partial illumination. "This is strange," he said, "but is it true?" as he laid down the *Ruins of Empires*.

From Volney he turned to Helvetius, and his orthodoxy received an additional shock: next Diderot was consulted, and our Hume; the edifice of his faith, tottered more; the belief of his forefathers was undermined and shaken to the very base. Up to this point the truth had been shut

out from him,—up to this point he had been walking in darkness. He abandoned his old creed, but he did not immediately take up a new one. He was in doubt, he was perplexed; he knew not what he was doing. He asked himself whether he was entering the true Canaan,—the Land of Promise he had been seeking so long.

He was very young; he believed that he was doing right. There was no one whose opinion he could ask; he was obliged to rely upon the strength, or the weakness rather, of his own intellect. He had no other object but the acquisition of truth. He thought, for he was no casuist, that he was treading the right path; but he was not.—He said to himself, “Prejudice is the sworn foe of truth. I must dispossess myself of all prejudice.” He had been, from his cradle upwards, imbibing the doctrines of a particular creed; he had sucked in orthodoxy with his mother’s milk. He was prejudiced; it behoved him to throw aside all foregone conclusions, and to set out in search of truth with a mind quite denuded of bias.

But endeavouring, in all sincerity as he did, to set the scales of his judgment in equilibrio, he only emptied the balance on one side to make that on the other preponderate. There is nothing more difficult in the world than to force one’s-self to be unprejudiced. Prepossessions are spon-

taneous, not voluntary. We cannot control them at will.

Let no man condemn Everard. He thought that he was doing right. But he was ignorant; he was quite a child; it did not occur to him that the knowledge which we acquire by our own exertions, by our own patient and methodical investigations, takes root in the mind with a stability, which is not possessed by that which is communicated to us, through another, by fitful and irregular starts. A man may throw a cloak over your shoulders, but you must draw it tightly around you with your own hands, or you will lose it. Besides, Everard was wiser and older than he was when the parish minister was the oracle of his youthful understanding; his intellect was now more cultivated; the soil was in a fitter state to receive whatever seeds might fall upon it: but the poor boy forgot all this. He took up the *Système de la Nature*; he read a few chapters; but he did not like it; the style was too inornate: he threw aside the volume, and took up (I know not how it got there) Sir William Drummond's *Œdipus Judaicus*.

How much better it would have been for her son if Mrs. Sinclair had burnt all these books. "A little philosophy," saith Bacon, "inclineth men's minds to atheism; but depth in philosophy

bringeth mens' minds about to religion." What could be expected from Everard, a child studying metaphysics, but error and untruth? An infant playing with the strings of a harp maketh not sweet music.

But why did not Everard peruse some good antagonist work? There were many such in his library, and it was his intention to read them hereafter: but at present he was counteracting the prejudices which had been instilled into his youthful mind by his mother, the parish minister, and the Bible. All this was only a preparative, a certain undercoating of paint which he was smearing over the edifice of his mind; it was not intended to remain there; but it did; the structure was defaced; and thus did it stand for many years the monument of a purpose unaccomplished.

Amongst other works which Everard alighted upon was Godwin's *Political Justice*. "Here," said the young student, as he closed the book, "I have found what I have so long been seeking. This is truth; this is reason: I am contented. Here can I anchor in safety, secure from the storms of desolating infidelity, and equally sheltered from the whirlwinds of ruthless and intolerant bigotry. This is pure, rational, unadulterated truth. This is the haven of my wandering de-

sires. Happy, indeed, was the hour which directed my bark to so prosperous a port."

But did Everard understand what he read? I do not think it likely that he did. His intellect had just arrived at a degree of maturity, which enabled him to comprehend the full force of each individual argument, as one after another they passed like the scenes of a moving panorama, in gradual succession before him, though his powers were not sufficiently extended to take in a series of arguments—to classify them, to compare them, and to reason on the efficiency of a whole, from the relation of its parts to one another. He knew just enough to collect gall, and to think that he was gathering honey.

When Everard's mother died, the poor boy naturally expected that the small degree of forbearance, which had hitherto been exercised towards him, would now be entirely withdrawn. But he was mistaken. Mr. Sinclair became more kind, not more harsh, in his demeanour. Without approximating to the fondness of the parent, he became altogether a different person. He did not kick his son; he did not call him a natural. He sometimes said, "Come here, Everard," and not "Come here, you spooney." He gave his boy a book at Christmas. I believe it was White's

Farriery. Once he condescended to say, "You have a very fine head of hair." Poor Everard ! he could not help crying, when he marked the altered conduct of his father. All the thumps he had received, all the curses that had been heaped upon him, had not wrung from him half so many tears as did those few words of kindness.

I am not sure what it was that wrought this change in the behaviour of Everard's surviving parent. Perhaps it was, that there was no opposition ; for Mr. Sinclair, when he was opposed, always persisted, with double vehemence, in the conduct which was controverted by his opposers. He did this out of spite, for he was spiteful. Obstinate people generally are. — Perhaps, however, it was remorse. I hope it was, for I would not deal harshly even with Mr. Sinclair. He might have been desirous to atone for the death of his wife by kindness to his poor child. He knew well enough that he had killed the former by hating and persecuting the latter. Perhaps, he was sorry for what he had done ; and this strange alteration in his demeanour was the overflowing of a contrite heart.

But the kindness of Mr. Sinclair endured not for many days. It was a bright, evanescent gleam of sunshine, short-lived as it was beautiful and cheering.

Everard was no hypocrite. He was the most single-hearted creature in the world: the very thought of duplicity made him shudder. He had never kept a secret in his life: there was no difference with him, between thinking and saying. He had never entertained a thought, which he would have shrunk from embodying in words; he had never cherished any reflections, which he would have hesitated to proclaim aloud, from a high place, in the presence of the whole world. Much less upon the present reason did he think that there was any occasion for duplicity. Encouraged by the unusual condescension of his father, he freely unburthened his heart: it was a relief, it was a delight to him: how glad he was to find a living creature, in whose presence he might pour out his soul; and that creature, too, his father — how full of happiness he was. Mr. Sinclair inclined his ear, and Everard discoursed frankly. He scrupled not to speak of his studies and his doubts; he hesitated not to lay bare his bosom — all that he had discarded of his old, and all that he cherished of his new faith, nothing was concealed from his father.

Mr. Sinclair at first was astounded. He knew not what to make of this confession. His first idea was that his son had gone mad; but he listened in silence and marvelled. Everard soon

became somewhat more explicit. He declared that the existing state of things was little conducive to the happiness of the community. The religion, in the tenets of which he had been educated, was unsatisfactory. He was not convinced of its infallibility. Reason was the best criterion of truth. Opinions ought not to be hereditary.

Mr. Sinclair opened his eyes. He was no longer perplexed with regard to the drift of poor Everard's discourse. He poured out a glass of port, for he happened to be sitting over his wine. Then he slapped his thigh vehemently with the palm of his right hand, and pronounced this dreadful anathema:

“Opinions ought not to be hereditary! I'll tell you what, Master Everard, nor property either. If you expect to get anything of mine, you'll find yourself wonderfully mistaken. I guess, Master Philosopher, you'll have to whistle for it. Why, damn me, the boy has gone mad; he will doubt soon that I am his father; and, by Jove, I begin to do the same. That ever I should have begotten an atheist! that ever a son of mine should be a heathen! I would almost as leave that he were a poet. He will ruin himself and bring disgrace upon his family by his heterodoxical opinions. But the world shall not say that it was my doing: I will have all this stuff flogged out of you. I

will write to Dr. R—— before the post goes ; you shall go to school, I'm d——d if you shan't."

Great as was Mr. Sinclair's ingenuity, he could not hit upon any severer punishment for his son than sending him to school.

Everard said nothing ; but his heart was ready to leap from his bosom. With sorrow ? No : with joy ! How impotent is the malevolence of the ignorant.

"Those books,"—continued Mr. Sinclair,—
"those rascally books have been the ruin of you. I wish that you had never learnt to read. Books are the curse of society ; they are the subversion of all order and decency. I hate books,—I will never suffer another one to enter the doors of my house. I will burn all that we have ; I'll petition Parliament to put a stop to the printing-press ! Get out of my sight ! You are an atheist ! and will some day be a poet." And Everard walked out of the room.

But Mr. Sinclair was lamentably mistaken ; his son was not an atheist. It is almost ridiculous to enlarge upon the religious opinions of a boy : but that boy had read much, and he had reflected still more. Besides, he was very talented ; and the opinions of a clever boy are better than those of a dull man, upon every thing but matters of experience.

However, talented as he was, his opinions were not worth much. "The true object of juvenile education," says Mr. Godwin, "is to provide, against the age of five-and-twenty, a mind well-regulated, active, and prepared to learn." But Everard was scarcely fourteen, and he was not only prepared to learn, but he had learnt.

His opinions, if they were nothing else, were genuine. Though he lacked wisdom, he did not lack sincerity: he was honest. His creed, such as it was, was the offspring of conviction, not convenience. He recognized an invisible Spirit of consummate intellectual beauty, pervading and governing the universe. He admired, he loved, he worshipped this Spirit; not with any set ceremonies,—as he was wont to express,—not with any periodical and circumscribed formalities of lip and knee-worship,—but with a devout heart, whose temple was the mighty universe, whose sabbath was a whole life. The flame upon his altar was ever burning like that of the vestals of old. He honoured the Creator by doing good to the creature: he believed that a pure heart and a benevolent spirit were more acceptable to God than blind faith and religious enthusiasm. He thought that piety was better than superstition, and that one good action was worth a volume of theology. Thus far, and no farther, he was an atheist.

“But, at all events, he was no Christian, and he did not believe in the Bible.” I will explain: he had read the sacred writings; he had studied them very intently, and believed them, as others believe them, to be works of divine revelation: but he did not interpret the scriptures precisely as the churchman is wont. He looked more to the spirit than to the letter. He recognized a deep vein of allegory pervading, in many instances, the narrative portion of holy writ. He read the Bible somewhat as the Swedenborgian does, though he did not know that such a sect was in existence. He believed in a future state, but not in the ultimate damnation of the wicked. He did not comprehend (and who at his age ever did?) the complicated nature of the Trinity; but he did not on that account reject it. The divine incarnation of the Messiah was a mystery which baffled his researches: he did not understand it, and a person can scarcely believe that which he does not understand. Yet he did not discard it: his faith hovered like a bird between earth and heaven,—between the man and the God.—“He was a sceptic, then?” Well; granted; but not an universal sceptic.—“The dogmatist,” says Watts, “is sure of every thing; the sceptic believes nothing.” Allowing this to be correct, Everard was neither the one nor the other.

“ But how could he believe in the Bible without believing in the divinity of the Messiah ? ” — Perhaps Everard Sinclair could not have answered that question himself in a manner satisfactory to the interrogator. But the boy with all his ingenuity was no match for a practised theologian. Everything as yet was crude, uncertain, unfixed in his mind. He could scarcely convince himself that he was right, much less could he convince another. But the inconsistency spoken of above was not altogether irreconcilable. He did not read the scriptures as we do, neither did he *dis*-believe in the divine incarnation. I must not suffer myself to wander into the thorny paths of theological controversy. I already have gone too far, considering the profane nature of this work. But it is requisite to the full development of Everard’s character, that these things should at least be partially understood.

But Everard was in reality a Christian,—a sincere and devout Christian. The character of the Messiah, as recorded in the New Testament, he looked upon as the most beautiful impersonation of unsullied virtue upon record : the Sermon on the Mount he regarded as the most perfect collection of moral ethics ever framed for the amelioration of mankind. Both the person and his doctrines were so intrinsically excellent, that whether they were

human or divine, they were equally worthy of imitation and observance. In this point of view, the divine incarnation affected not the lustre of the example or the excellence of the instruction presented to him. Everard was no casuist; he did not throw aside Christian morality because he did not comprehend Christian theology; on the contrary, he endeavoured with his whole soul to assimilate the conduct of his life, as far as humanity would suffer him, to the unblameable tenor of that upright One's ways, who lived a fair pattern of humility,—who reviled not when he was reviled,—who endured suffering but inflicted none. He was essentially a believer and a Christian. His faith was made apparent by his acts. He did not array himself against divine, but against civil institutions: he lacked not faith in God, but in man,—not in the spirit, but in the form,—not in the book, but in the commentator.

He thought that the great machine of society was badly organized. He thought that there was more unhappiness and unrighteousness in the world, than is accordant with the desire of a merciful God. He conceived that by a concurrence of voluntary energies, very much of this evil might be amended. He did not think that the institutions of humanity were founded upon true Christian principles. This was unfortunate; for people

in general care less about the spiritual than the conventional. The world is more violent in defending the forms, than the essence of the religion it professes.

I hope that I have made it appear that Everard was neither an atheist, nor, indeed, a follower of Anti-Christ. I have tried to do so. Perhaps I have failed. However, his deeds will speak for him. When they said that Sophocles was mad, he read his *Œdipus Coloneus* to the judges.

“ But Everard Sinclair was, at all events, heterodox. He did not belong to the Church of England, nor subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles.” There I abandon him,—I give him up. I have nothing to say in his behalf, but that he had some very excellent qualities. Bear with him, I beseech you. Do not condemn him, for he condemned no one. Deal with him as Isaac Walton did with the frogs. Deal with him *as though he were your brother*.

CHAPTER IV.

He was a man different from other men,
• • • •

And phantom thoughts unsought for troubled him.

COLERIDGE.

He seemed almost apparitional, suggesting dim reminiscences of him who shot the albatross. He was as a mystery in a winding-sheet, crowned with a halo.

JOHN GALT.

SCHOOL has been rightly called "a microcosm;" it is, indeed, a little world; the argument of a greater work,—the sketch of a larger picture,—a puppet show,—a theatre in miniature. It is a sort of undress rehearsal of the tragedy of life. Life is always a tragedy, for there is death in the closing scene.

What a similarity there is between the greater world and the less! The same struggles, the

same strife, the same friendships, the same enmities, the same all-absorbing selfishness, and very frequently the same actors. Much has been said about the innocence of youth ; there is very little innocence in a large school. Look around you : there stands the thief, there stands the liar, there the hypocrite. Do you not see the exacting tyrant, and beside him the fawning parasite ? Who, that has ever been at school, cannot call to mind a specimen of each ? But on the other side of the picture, there are brighter figures to be seen : the open hand and the open heart, earnest affection, chivalrous generosity, unswerving integrity,— they are all there to vary the group. Time strengthens the lines and colours of the moral painting, but alters not the original conception. “ Men palliate and conceal their original qualities,” says Montaigne, “ but do not alter them.” “ The child is father of the man.”

I have said that very frequently the same actors, who appear together upon the stage of boyhood, mingle the one with the other in the more important relations of after-life. My history exemplifies this perhaps in an extraordinary degree.

There were about fifty boys in the school, of all ages and dimensions, from the tall dandy of seventeen, with his well-brushed coat and polished Wellingtons, to the little slip-shod, ink-bespattered

urchin, with his crownless hat, his rent pantaloons, and his parti-coloured, but joyous-looking visage. Dr. R——, his son, and a certain Mr. Baker, who filled the situation of junior usher, were the potentates, who framed and administered the laws which regulated our little monarchy. It was the business of this Mr. Baker to enforce discipline out of school. He it was who watched over us and controlled us when we were disporting ourselves. He was the most unfortunate specimen of humanity, perhaps, that ever existed.

Uncouth in his person and in his gestures, with a muscular and most unwieldy frame, and a physiognomy strikingly brutal, he moved amongst us, a vast mass of animated matter, such as might be supposed to have been hewn out of a rock, and set in motion by the wand of a magician. He put one in mind of Frankenstein's monster, he was so large and so ugly; or an overgrown Brobdignag boy in a duffle grey *robe du matin*, and a pair of thrice-scoured drab inexpressibles, which concealed not the enormous dimensions of a pair of clumsy ankles, which looked as though they had got the elephantiasis, or at all events, an attack of oedema. We used to call him "Œdipus Tyrannus," which being interpreted, is "Swell-foot the Tyrant."

Neither was the moral man much more favoured by nature than the physical; Mr. Baker was a

monster of selfishness and cruelty ; coarse in his manners, ferocious in his temper, indiscriminate in his judgments. He was unfeeling, arbitrary, rapacious, and exacting. Humanity was never so degraded as in the person of this man. We hated him one and all,—perhaps Everard Sinclair excepted. He was not fit to govern ; he was not even fit to teach. He had a considerable quantity of verbal knowledge ; but his understanding was of the most limited order. He knew Ovid's epistles by heart, but he scarcely knew what they were all about. He read an ode of Horace as though it were one of Brady's and Tate's.

But my history, I am happy to say, has little to do with this man. At the end of my first half year at school, we petitioned Dr. R—— in a body, to dismiss this leviathan of ignorance and inclemency. Our petition was unhesitatingly granted : if it had not been, I verily believe that we should have torn the usher into pieces, as the Bacchants tore Pentheus of old. School-boys have very fair notions about resisting oppression and taxation. It fares ill with the usher of a school, if the man is unpopular amongst the boys.

Accordingly, Mr. Baker was dismissed, and another reigned there in his stead. Another ! and *such* another ! There could not, in the multitudinous ranks of humanity, have been two beings

more entirely dissimilar than were the old and the new usher. It was Apollo coming after Silenus. It was a Ferdinand after a Caliban, and we were all the Mirandas. It was light after darkness,—beauty after deformity,—genius after stolidity. The one was all body, the other was all mind. They were the *τα εναντια* of humanity.

The new usher's name was Delaval —.

He was about five-and-thirty years of age; he was tall, and he stooped a little; he generally, indeed I may say invariably, attired himself in a complete suit of black; his motions were for the most part graceful, though his walk was slow and careless, like that of a man who reads as he goeth along; and his manners were those of a gentleman, entirely destitute of all conventional affectations, unstudied, inartificial, inornate. His was the spontaneous gentility of a cultivated mind, not the exotic foppery of a *petit maitre*; he was to a man of fashion what Hamlet was to Laertes; he was not “full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great showing:” but he was a gentleman for all that; it was his nature to be so, he could not be otherwise.

He was altogether an extraordinary being; you could scarcely have looked upon him without saying to yourself—“This is a man of genius.” His face was a book wherein you might have read hour

after ~~him~~ together : his aspect was always varying : now it was troubled, now serene, now sorrowful. Now desponding : it was always thoughtful, and never joyous : it was more changeable than a bubble floating about in the sunny atmosphere.

What a man to be usher in a school ! He was the most tremblingly sensitive person I ever encountered in my life ; it was quite painful to see him ; he was alive to every impression ; a hackneyed sentiment in a classical author recited by one of his pupils—a word—a name—a cloud passing over the sun—a trifle lighter than air, more unsubstantial than gossamer, would jar upon the chords of association with a power almost inconceivable, and create an immediate change in his tones, in his manner, in his aspect ; every current moved him : he was like the thing of corks and feathers which mariners hang out in a calm to catch the least breath that is stirring.

He was handsome, but his face was pale and attenuated ; it was evident that he had suffered much. In mind, or in body ? In both. There was neither health nor happiness in his countenance, but there was benevolence and great wisdom ; he had a high broad forehead like a block of white marble ; it was a head worthy of Plato, who took his name from the breadth of his temples.*

His hair was black as night, and he wore it after

* —and his shoulders. See Diogenes Laertius.

a strange fashion, in black curls behind, whilst the front part of his head was bald almost to the crown; he was altogether a picturesque-looking person; there was an expression of meek despondency about his mouth, which was touchingly beautiful; and what sweet accents issued from that mouth! There was music in the tones of his voice; he spoke, and, like Philaster in the play, what he uttered was "far above singing."

He was a being to wonder at, and we did wonder. Young people are prone to be curious, and Delaval mystified us all. "Who is he? What is he?" we asked of one another, but the only answer was, "He is Mr. Delaval." He was too good to be an usher in a school; he was a profound scholar, and a consummate gentleman; profound scholars and consummate gentlemen are not often ushers in schools. Was he poor? That could not well be, for he had always money at command. If there was any thing wanted in the school, Mr. Delaval was sure to provide it—cricket-bats, foot-balls, whatever it might be; Mr. Delaval headed every subscription; he was known to give largely to the poor; he was always dressed like a gentleman, and it was roundly whispered that his bookseller's bill exceeded the amount of his salary half-yearly.

We could not imagine why a man with abund-

ance of money, a refined and highly cultivated mind, consummate breeding, and the most sensitive temperament that ever afflicted a human being, should wish to be an usher in a school any more than drummer in a regiment. It was Apollo tending swine for Admetus. We marvelled.—“Perhaps,” said one of us, who was rather wiser than the rest, “that the Doctor is going to take him into partnership. I should not be surprised if Delaval had invested his capital in the business.” This boy was the son of a stock-jobber.

“For my part,” said my brother Frederick, “I think that he is a mysterious person; perhaps he has committed some crime; he appears to have a weight upon his mind; he is a restless, uneasy, sort of man. Eugene Aram was usher in a school, he who was hanged for the murder of a man somewhere in the north.”

Oh! the kindness and charity of my amiable brother Frederick.

“I admire Mr. Delaval very much,” said Everard Sinclair to me. “He is a kind-hearted, benevolent, and intellectual man; he is likely to be a great acquisition to Dr. R——, and to his pupils. The calling does not disgrace the man; it is the man that disgraces the calling. Socrates delighted in the society of young people, and Milton was a schoolmaster.”

Mr. Delaval was popular amongst us. Though he fulfilled with scrupulous exactitude the duties of his particular situation, so as to give entire satisfaction, in every respect, to his superior, he was never unnecessarily severe. Unwilling to inflict punishment, or in any way to cause its infliction; ready to oblige, when applied to, though usually too self-involved to confer an unsolicited obligation; kind and condescending in his manner, under any combination of circumstances, he neither courted, nor kept himself aloof from the society of our youthful congregation. Though he took no part in our amusements, he appeared fond of contemplating them from a distance. He looked at us, as we disported ourselves in his presence, with an eye of speculative curiosity; he watched the goings on of our infant world, as a man of science scrutinizes, through a microscope, the liver of a bilious mosquito, or the lungs of a tuberculous flea.

But he was not companionless. There was one amongst us to whom he clung with an earnestness of attachment, which was quite beautiful, and quite incomprehensible. There was one boy, and one only, in the school, whom Mr. Delaval appeared to regard with feelings of the intensest interest. He looked at us from afar off, as though we were so many links of the great chain of hu-

manity, and no more ; but he looked through and through this boy with an eye of the most piercing investigation. All the thoughts of the usher seemed to converge to this one focus.

It was not in the least strange that this boy should have been selected out of the herd to be the especial favourite of Mr. Delaval ; it was only strange that Mr. Delaval should in any instance have so far thrown off his habitual reserve, as to make a favourite of any one boy, however great his attractions may have been. *We thought it* strange ; and many were the speculations to which this mysterious connexion gave rise ; but, after all, there was nothing wonderful in the business, for they who are the least sociable with the community, are always the most ardent in their individual attachments.

The name of the usher's young friend was the Honourable Henry Leicester. He was the eldest and the only son of an English baron, and was said to have been descended on one side from John of Gaunt, and on the other, from Pierce Gaveston. Be that as it may ; he was something much better than the heir apparent to a peerage : he was a fine, joyous, free-spirited boy, with an open, beaming countenance, plenty of ready wit, and great quickness of apprehension. He was just what a school-boy ought to be. He was

lively without being flippant ; he was active without being boisterous ; he had courage without recklessness ; generosity without folly ; and was most entirely a gentleman, without the least odour of the fop.

Leicester joined our little community at the commencement of the same half-year which saw Delaval installed into the office lately held by the unfortunate Mr. Baker. He soon became a favourite amongst us. He had such an inexhaustible flow of jocund animal spirits ; he was so imperturbably good-humoured, and so clever withal. His was the loudest laugh, the most elastic step, the clearest, merriest voice in the school. With all parties he was popular ; standing mid-way, as he did, between the big boys and the little ones, the seniors admitted him into their society, and petted him ; the juniors looked up to, and loved him ; his class-fellows, of which I was one, never envied him, but did all they could to conceal his delinquencies from the master, whenever, by his idleness in the school-room, or by his frolicsome excursions in the playing fields, he transgressed the regulations of the establishment. In fact, young Harry Leicester was *the rage* ; he was, beyond all dispute, the most popular boy in the academy.

But his popularity did not endure very long ;

for Mr. Delaval gradually wormed himself into the affections of young Leicester, and prostrating himself before the idol of our little world, engrossed the divinity to himself, and dismissed all other worshippers from the temple.

It was not in a week or a month that Delaval contrived to do this. The ascendancy which he gained over the boy was the work of time ; he advanced slowly, but he was most entirely successful. Gradually he weaned young Leicester from all his old companions and pursuits ; till, at length, the most sociable boy in the school became, if not the most reserved, certainly the most exclusive. It was not that he cut his old friends, or appeared tired of their company ; it was, that, in the person of Delaval there was centered a strong magnetic power, which attracted the needle of the boy's affections, and suffered it not to turn itself towards any other point of the universe. He was obliged to abandon the society of his school-fellows ; he had no time that he could devote to it.

Rarely was it that, during the hours of recreation, these two were now known to be apart ; and if they did happen to be sundered for a while, the eyes of the master were observed to follow every motion of his juvenile companion. They read together ; they walked together ; when abroad in the fields, they sometimes would stroll away

from the rest of the party, and wander nobody could ascertain whither. To tell the truth, we were fairly mystified ; we set our brains to work, but elicited nothing ; we wondered on to the end of the chapter.

My brother said that it was “ very suspicious ; ” shrugged his shoulders, and looked volumes. One of the boys suggested that Mr. Delaval was “ fishing for an invitation,” to spend the holidays at Lord Leicester’s castle in ——shire ; another, (and this was certainly a suggestion which displayed a remarkable degree of sagacity,) that the usher was no less a personage than “ *Lord Leicester himself, in disguise.* ”

“ I see nothing strange,” said Everard Sinclair, “ in this connexion, after all. Mr. Delaval is attached to Leicester, for the same reason that you are attached to him, or that I am attached to him,—*for his own sake.* He has a multitude of endearing qualities. He is sincere, honest, generous, and courageous. I do not think it in the least strange, that Delaval should love one so highly-gifted as Leicester.”

“ Perhaps not,” answered I ; “ but I *do* think it very strange that Leicester should be so attached to Delaval. What can a merry, high-spirited fellow see to fascinate him in the grave aspect, the reserved manners, and the studious habits of a

man like Delaval, who is old enough at least to be his father, and who has nothing at all in common with a light-hearted vivacious boy?"

"Gratitude," replied Everard Sinclair, who was always ready to put a charitable construction upon every action of a doubtful origin, which was canvassed in his presence.—"Gratitude is a strong tie; and kindness is sufficient of itself to breed love in every well-ordered mind. It seems to me quite natural that Leicester should requite the affection of one who has shown such marked favour towards him. It is not always that there is an impassable gulf between youth and age. The superior wisdom of Mr. Delaval, his varied knowledge, and his eloquent conversation may all have charms for Harry Leicester surpassing any, with which we, his school-fellows and coevals, are invested."

At this moment the usher passed before us, accompanied by his young friend. Delaval was talking earnestly, and the boy was looking up into the face of the speaker with an expression of the most wrapt and admiring attention upon his fair, open, but now unusually thoughtful countenance.

"Did you ever see," said I, "a change so entire as that which has passed over Leicester of

late? A fine, frank, open-hearted fellow, as he was, he is now quite gloomy and reserved. He is the best cricketer in the school, yet he never now handles a bat; so fond as he used to be of this fine manly game, he has given it up entirely, and now does nothing but read—read—read; was there ever such a sap in existence? Look at him; his very face is quite altered; it is a yard longer than it was—and his manners too, and his conversation, and all about him; he has become quite a man of late. It is just as though half-a-dozen years had been added on to the sum of his age, since the beginning of last half. I wonder what all those books are about which he is so eternally reading. He takes devilish good care that we should not catch a glimpse of them, by my faith! He is a regular hole-and-corner student; but of course all these books are Delaval's. By the bye, did you see the other day that, when the foot-ball took the unwarrantable liberty of sweeping all the gods, goddesses, kings, philosophers and poets off the head of that poor Italian image-vender, Leicester came forward immediately, and paid fifteen shillings out of his own pocket, as a compensation, though he was not one of the players, which we all thought very strange."

"I thought it very charitable," replied Everard.

“I have always liked Harry Leicester, but this action has made me love him. What did you think of it, Claude?”

“I thought it very odd,” said I, “that Leicester should have had so much money. Cash, at this late season of the half-year, runs deuced short: and I’ll be bound for it, that all the foot-ball players could not have mustered fifteen shillings amongst them, to pay for the broken images. The fact is, as I shrewdly suspect, that Delaval keeps the purse of his young friend constantly supplied. My brother is confident of this, and says that Leicester is a great sneak: for my part, I am quite sure that Harry would do nothing dishonourable to save his life, yet I cannot help thinking —” here my oration was cut short by the sound of what Horace Smith has called, in Johnsonian language, a “tintinabulant appendage,” but which is better known by the monosyllabic name of a bell. It was the school-bell; and in less than a minute the play-ground was swept as with a besom; and a sort of smothered hum, like that of bees — a *loud silence*, as it were, pervaded the teeming school-room.

With regard to Delaval and Leicester, what puzzled us most of all, was this. The latter was frequently missing, and nobody knew where he was to be found. It was the custom of Dr. R——

not to interfere with our goings-on out of school, but to entrust this part of the management entirely to Mr. Delaval: and it was, therefore, whispered amongst us, that the usher, if he did not connive, at least “winked,” at the absence of his young friend, though his unswerving impartiality during study hours seemed to belie every suspicion of unfairness, and to say that he, who was so just *in* school, could hardly be so unjust or indeed so dishonourable, *out* of it.

It is more than probable that Leicester never strayed farther than the precincts of Delaval’s private room, where he might, with great likelihood, have been found very innocently employed upon a book: but youth is the season when the imagination runs riot, and wanders into strange places. What wonderful conjectures we made relating to this extraordinary pair! What extravagant and unprecedented surmises we gave vent to when we discussed their companionship! Vain conjectures, indeed, vain surmises! with how little of the truth were we acquainted! But at length an incident occurred which threw a little light upon the subject; but instead of solving our perplexity, it only mystified us still more, and gave a greater stimulus to our curiosity. I will set down this incident as it happened.

CHAPTER V.

You have consented all to work upon
The softness of my nature ; but take heed :
Though I can sleep in silence and look on
The mockery you make of my dull patience,
Yet you shall know, the best of ye, that in me
There is a masculine, a stirring spirit,
Which once provoked, shall, like a bearded comet,
Set ye at gaze and threaten horror.

FORD.

ONE day, Sinclair and I,—for we had by this time become inseparable companions,—were circum-ambulating the play-ground together, and discussing the merits of a poem which we happened lately to have been reading. The poem, if I remember right, was Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*, and Everard having alluded to a particular passage, we endeavoured to recall the words of it, but we could not ;

so we repaired to the school-room that we might refer to our copy of the work.

We scarcely had opened the door, when our attention was arrested by a crowd at the farther extremity of the room ; and advancing, we ascertained that the concourse was gathered in that corner of the study where the desk of Harry Leicester was situated ; but the cause of this popular commotion we were altogether at a loss to divine. Presently we joined the assembly. Leicester was not there.

“ Well, I thought it would come to this,” said Evans, a magnate of the first class. “ I thought that there was more in the conduct of Mr. Delaval than meets the eye of the school. Silent waters run deep. D— it, I never gave him credit for much. I thought that there was little good lurking beneath all that unsociable reserve ; you see that my suspicions are confirmed. The cloven hoof has become visible at last.”

“ Nor I, either,” said Brown, a diminutive, old-looking boy, who generally sang second to Evans ; “ nor I either, I assure you. I have always taken him for an hypocrite. Confound the fellow ! he looks it all over ; he is up to more than we think for. I did not like his refusing to play in our last match against the town ; though, poor devil ! for the matter of that, I don’t suppose he knows a bat

from a wicket. But at all events, he might just as well not have dissuaded Leicester from playing. We lost the match owing to that ——”

“And he would not even score for us,” said another. “Nor dine with the cricketers in the tent.”

In short, every one had something to urge against the unfortunate usher. The full tide of his popularity already had reached its height, and now on a sudden, it ebbed back with a tumultuous roar of disapprobation.

But still I knew not what had occasioned this sudden excitation of feeling. It was evident that Mr. Delaval was the individual who had awakened the popular fury ; but concerning the nature of his offence, I had no very distinct knowledge. I questioned one of the by-standers upon the subject, and was answered, “The book, to be sure !” but this was not very explanatory ; so I began to interrogate another boy ; but every body was so intent upon what was going forward, that I had great difficulty in eliciting any information connected with the tumult before me.

At length, I learned that Leicester had been summoned to the drawing-room by the announcement of a visit from a friend ; that he had been reading, when the servant had called him, and in the hurry and excitement of the moment, he had neglected to

lock up his book ; that the volume had been eagerly pounced upon, and found to be Paine's *Age of Reason*.

"But are you quite certain that the volume is Leicester's ?" said another voice, addressing the first speaker, who still held the book in his hand. "You cannot be sure of this, Evans ; it *may* belong to somebody else." I recognized the voice of my brother.

"Why, I found it," squeaked out a little boy from the crowd, who thought himself *pro tempore* a hero. "Leicester was reading it, for I saw him, when the servant came to say that he was wanted. I pounced upon the book immediately, and carried it off to Evans." And the chitterling looked for all the world as though he had done a magnanimous action.

"The more sneak you, then," cried out another little boy, whose person was lost in the crowd.

"But after all," continued my brother, in tones of the kindest expostulation, which I at least knew to be specious, "if Leicester *was* reading the book, it does not necessarily follow that Mr. Delaval has any thing to do with it."

This was merely intended to elicit fresh sparks of indignation from the already inflamed multitude. Frederick, whose heart was full of malice, chuckled inwardly, as he contemplated this excessively

foolish disturbance. But at the same time, without so far committing himself as to incense the insurgents, he was desirous that Leicester and Delaval should imagine that he had used every exertion to pacify the popular agitation. He blew upon the fire to spread it, and pretended that he was blowing it out.

“As for that, the matter is clear enough,” replied Brown; and his reply was exactly what my brother expected. “You know, and I know, and we all know, that Delaval and Leicester are inseparable. Who fills Leicester’s purse, I should like to know? Who supplies him with books but Delaval? Who translates all his lessons? Who makes all his verses, but Delaval? No wonder that he is top of the class; the matter is as clear as day-light; they are both of them *rank atheists*.”

There is something in the name of an atheist, peculiarly terrific to a boy’s understanding; an atheist is associated in his mind with a murderer, a pirate, or a robber, — a wretch delighting in violence and rapine. In the youthful imagination the word “atheism” includes the whole cycle of moral atrocities. The announcement of Brown was greeted on every side with groans and imprecations.

“Let us send them to Coventry,” cried Evans,

"let us burn the book ; let us shun the readers ; let us hold up their names to universal detestation ; let us placard the walls with the history of their disgrace ; no punishment can be too severe for an atheist. Let us petition Dr. R—— at once to dismiss Delaval and to expel Leicester. The whole school will be contaminated by their presence."

"Ay, ay," shouted twenty or thirty voices in concord, "burn the book ! — send them to Coventry ! — tell the Doctor !"

"Stay a moment," cried a gentle voice from the rear of the tumultuous crowd. "Consider well what you are about. Evans, have the goodness to listen."

It was Everard Sinclair. Partly from curiosity, and partly from respect to the speaker, the crowd made a channel for him to pass through. The rioters suspended their operations, and turned their attention towards Everard. It was precisely the same thing to them, as long as there was something going forward.

The young champion moved along the avenue of people, and when he had gained the centre of the crowd, he proceeded to address his school-fellows in a calm expostulating voice. There was nothing dictatorial or morose, nothing even querulous in his tones. How different was the

manner of my friend from that of an Evans or a Brown.

“Do not give way, I beseech you,” said Everard, addressing himself to his school-fellows, but more immediately to Evans and Brown, “unadvisedly to the impulse of the moment. It is better that a little reflection should precede any violent extremities. Be just,—I entreat you to be just. It is not just, much less is it generous, to condemn your fellow-creatures unheard.

“What is it these two have done, that you should load them with execrations and brand them as criminals? Have they offended against you? have they done any one thing which militates against the common welfare of our little world, my school-fellows? Nothing; I answer, positively nothing; they are guiltless of any evil intentions. You say that they are atheists; why, the man who wrote the very work which has so incensed you, was not an atheist, Evans. The first sentence in the book at once acquits him of atheism; but granting that Paine denied his God; what inferences can be drawn from that fact prejudicial to Delaval and Leicester? It does not follow that a man is a murderer because he studies the Newgate Calendar.

“Recollect yourselves, one moment. Does this squeamishness sit becomingly upon you, in whose

hands I have seen many books which go to the very root of morality,—gross and disgusting in their language,—teeming with profligate adventures,—full of the most demoralizing descriptions; the names of which I should blush were I to utter? Be patient: does it become you, I say, who hand about one to another openly these licentious publications, thinking it most honourable to possess them, and treasuring them up as the immediate jewels of your souls, thus loudly to express your abhorrence of a work written by Paine? Be consistent; but if you cannot be that, at all events, be *tolerant*.

“My friends, you remind me indeed of the countryman recorded in history, who voted for the Ostracism of Aristides, because he was tired of hearing him eternally called ‘the best.’ I believe that you have little else, in reality, to urge against Leicester; and I am certain that there is not one in the school who exceeds him in generosity of sentiment, or who is more devoted to the interests of his school-fellows. You have frequently seen me engaged upon the perusal of books very much of a nature similar to that on which you have just now pronounced summary judgment, and yet I am happy in feeling that I have not fallen from your esteem. Let it not then be said that we as boys, emulating the tyranny of popery, have introduced

an *index expurgatorius*, and banished intellectual liberty at one fell swoop from the precincts of the school."

There was a good deal of sound sense and some capital home-truths in this address, which must have had considerable effect upon every unprejudiced mind; but unfortunately Everard Sinclair had more courage than policy; he had no idea of truckling to the vices of those who were themselves so monstrously intolerant. If he had paused about mid-way in his harangue, and contented himself with appealing to the generosity, instead of reviling the inconsistency, of his hearers, it is more than probable that he would have succeeded in allaying the irritation of the assembly. But nothing is more disagreeable than truth, when it is dressed in a criminating guise; so Everard utterly failed. The allusion to the books ruined him.

When Everard ceased to speak, for a few moments there was a dead silence. For my part, I wondered that the rioters listened to him with such exemplary patience. But now their forbearance was at an end; the popular excitement burst out again, and raged with renewed vigour. One boy looked into the face of another, and dissatisfaction was legibly written there. A murmur of disapprobation broke forth. Brown was the first to speak.

"And that does not mend the matter," said he;

"your being an atheist does not make Delaval and Leicester a bit the more virtuous; it only makes you the more depraved. Why, d—n it, you are all atheists together. 'A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind;'" and he chuckled at the wit of his quotation.

"By the Lord!" exclaimed Evans, infuriated to such a degree that he absolutely foamed at the mouth, "the impertinence of the fellow is insufferable; he compares us to the countryman in Plutarch; by Jove, sir, I wont be compared!" and he moved towards the fire in his wrath, and threw the 'Age of Reason' behind it.

But the eye of Everard Sinclair was fixed upon every motion of his turbulent adversary. He sprang forward, quick as thought, and snatched the devoted book from the flames. Then, holding it firmly in one hand, he stood with his back towards the fire, and proceeded to remonstrate with his opponent, in language at once firm and expostulatory.

Everard's extreme calmness disconcerted his furious enemy. Evans was astounded, paralyzed; he stood still and looked quite bewildered. He did not know what it behoved him to do. Presently, however, he recovered himself, and exclaimed in a fierce voice,—

"The insolence of the creature astonishes me,—By Jove! it is past endurance,—I cannot stand

this ; and I will not. — Take *that*, sir, for your pains." And clenching a fist of no ordinary dimensions, he struck Everard, with all his force, upon the chest.

But Sinclair was neither astonished nor disturbed by this movement upon the part of his adversary. He looked with a tranquil aspect upon Evans's truculent countenance, and cried out, with admirable promptitude, in the high words of the ancient warrior, "*Strike, but hear !*"

"I will strike, sir ; but I will not hear," said Evans, who had by this time lost all control over himself, and was quite livid with rage, "I will *not* hear," and he struck Everard a second time.

Up to this point, I had contented myself with remaining a spectator of the affray ; it is true, that I had been observed to divest myself of my jacket, and to draw up my shirt sleeves, as though I had been preparing for action of some kind or other ; but I had said nothing and done nothing as yet, — I was making ready, that I might not be taken unawares.

"Look at Claude Jerningham ! look at Claude Jerningham !" cried a dozen voices at once ; "by Jove, that was a facer !" It was indeed ; I had made my way up to where Evans was standing, and struck him, with all the strength I could muster, just under the right eye. But I was no match for Evans. In a few moments I was floored !

Now Everard Sinclair, who had hesitated to strike, not from fear, but upon principle, raised his fallen friend from the ground, and, crying out, "This is *my* quarrel, Jerningham!" he prepared, as I had done before him, "to do battle with this Roman."

By this time Brown had stood up beside his athletic companion. All school-boys are fond of witnessing a fight, and there was now every prospect of a good one. A ring was formed; we were two to two, and pretty equally matched. We began: there was a prodigious outlay of pugnacity. Blows followed one upon another like hailstones in the month of November.

In the midst of all this confusion Mr. Delaval stood amongst us. He looked more than usually dignified: his figure, which was naturally commanding, had assumed all its original erectness. There was a remarkable degree of energetic decision manifested in his whole comportment. He did not look fiercely upon us; he was stern, calm, and resolute. His appearance awed us into inactivity: there he stood in the very midst of us, before we were aware of his approach: there he stood, as Coriolanus stood of old,

Like an eagle in a dove-cot,
Fluttering the Volscians.

Our strife was suddenly at an end. His appearance amongst us, so unexpected and spectral as it was, had the effect of immediately subduing us. Evans and Brown endeavoured to slink into the crowd, but the quick eye of Delaval had marked them. Everard Sinclair stood firm ; he was the only one amongst us, who, in the crisis, had preserved his tranquillity.

“ My young friends,” said Mr. Delaval, “ what means this scene of unexampled confusion ? Why is the hand raised to strike ? Why is this contention amongst you ? Dogs fight because they are brute beasts ; children because they know no better ; soldiers because it is their business ; but you, my friends, are free to exercise your own judgments, and are capable of reflection. You ought to, and you do, know better. Let me entreat you to remember yourselves,—let order and good feeling be restored amongst you ; be friendly one to another. Believe me, that it goes to my heart to see any contention amongst you. Jerningham, Claude Jerningham, I mean, come hither, and explain to me the cause of this uproar.”

The assembly was broken up ; the crowd dispersed itself about the room. Notwithstanding that Delaval himself was the object of their universal disapprobation—notwithstanding that in his

absence they had passed a vote of censure upon him, and had loudly expressed their abhorrence of what they were pleased to call his impiety, when the criminal in person appeared amongst them, they were afraid to make manifest their displeasure; they were awed into silent submission, and skulked away muttering to themselves. It is true that one or two of the boys, with averted faces and closed lips, had the courage to hiss as they walked off, but there was nothing electrical in this; these tokens of displeasure were uncommunicated, and therefore they were not repeated. The sentence which they had passed was abrogated through a total inability to execute it, like that of the members of Brookes' against fighting Fitzgerald.

Mr. Delaval desired me to follow him up stairs, into his own private room; I could not help thinking, at the time, that this was inconsiderate in the usher, for I fully expected that his departure would have been a signal for the recommencement of the tumult. However, my surmises were without foundation; the fire had been extinguished altogether, not smothered, as I anticipated, for a time.

"Jerningham," said Mr. Delaval, when we were alone, "I put implicit confidence in your veracity; I have singled you out from the many, to acquaint me with the history of this disturbance.

I observed that you were one of the combatants, but I know that you are naturally of a peaceable and quiet disposition. Your friend Sinclair is another at whose unwonted pugnacity I marvel; he is the gentlest creature in the world; how came he to be betrayed into ferocity? I desire to know every circumstance connected with this extraordinary affray."

I felt myself delicately situated, but I saw not any passage of escape. I would have given almost all that I possessed to have been spared this recital of events, but I saw not a single outlet of evasion; my character for veracity, upon which Mr. Delaval had complimented me, was not to be lightly regarded, and the main cause of this unfortunate uproar involved such an unpleasant history, that for some time I was distracted between two warring opinions. Rapidly I turned over in my mind every circumstance of the confusion we had been engaged in,—the discovery of Leicester's book—the suspicions expressed of his infidelity—the censure that had been passed upon Delaval—the determination that had been made to "cut" them—the baseness imputed to the usher—the exculpatory harangue of poor Everard—*this* I could not resist. The desire of picturing my friend in the noble and disinterested position which he had maintained in the recent

disturbances, banished all my delicate scruples, and I narrated every circumstance as it happened.

Delaval was not a person to listen unmoved to this narration. I saw that he was greatly affected; the moisture stood upon his brow in large drops. I was inflicting upon him the most acute tortures; once or twice I paused in the narrative, and he was impatient that I should go on; he had wound himself up to the highest possible point of endurance, and he was determined to hear all. "Go on! go on!" he exclaimed, "do not spare me—do not spare me." He endeavoured to say this jestingly; then he walked up and down the room wiping the dampness from his forehead, and struggling to reassume his serenity; every word that I uttered entered like iron into his soul. I knew that he would be wondrously agitated, but I scarcely expected a display of feeling so fearful as what I now witnessed; I was alarmed at the effect that I had produced, but still I was sufficiently self-possessed—I should say, sufficiently barbarous, to watch every manifestation of his agony—every motion of the sufferer's frame; his bosom was heaving convulsively; his hands were clenched firmly together; every muscle of his body was braced up in one mighty effort at composure. When I had done my story, he endeavoured to laugh. **My God!** what a mockery was the at-

tempt. "Well! and is this all? Ha! ha! this the grand cause of confusion? I certainly expected something more, Jerningham: and so this is all! What a mountain made of a mole-hill! Really it is very ridiculous! It reminds me of the siege of Troy—ten years' war for a woman;—*Rixantur multi*—you know the rest, my boy: it is a trite adage, but true. Really you have amused me exceedingly; 'tis altogether a laughable affair; upon my word, Jerningham, you have amused me. You may go now, my lad; you may go now: there, shut the door." And he seated himself down at the table, exhausted with the efforts he had made.

Will it be believed possible, that before I had proceeded many yards, I felt an irresistible inclination to return? I was affected; nay, frightened beyond measure at the contemplation of what I had witnessed. I would have voluntarily exposed myself to pain, and have undergone considerable privations, to allay the gnawing affliction that was preying upon the vitals of Delaval; I pitied the poor sufferer from my heart; I sympathized with his misery, and would have assuaged it; the tears stood in my eyes, and vainly I tried to check them. I had always felt an affection for Delaval, and now that I saw him so wretched, my heart yearned towards the man with an unwonted

degree of intenseness. And yet, strange as it may appear, inconceivable as this narration may be, I solemnly and sincerely declare, that were I to have died upon the spot—that if death were to have visited my offence, I could not, by any means, have resisted the earnest desire I felt to return: like Orpheus departing out of hell, I felt myself violently impelled to look back, whatever might be the consequences. I retraced the steps I had taken, my heart was throbbing with excitement: my hand was again upon the door—shame crimsoned my cheek as I enter into these fulsome details—my meanness was almost incredible: I bowed my head down, and condescended to listen ere I entered. I heard a noise, half sobbing, half sighing, like that which a strong man sends forth, under the pressure of a crushing weight of agony, when struggling in vain to compose himself. I was not contented with listening: my curiosity had arrived at a height, which, to satisfy, I hesitated at nothing; I was capable of any degree of meanness—nothing too contemptible for me; every barrier of honour was broken down, my mind grovelled in the dust of extreme moral degradation. Suddenly was it prostrated at one blow into the slough of most debasing turpitude. I bent my body downward, and looked through a crevice in the door, to ascertain the

behaviour of Mr. Delaval. I saw that he was sitting on a chair, his elbows resting on the table; his face buried in his hands; his breast tumultuously heaving. Presently he rose up; there was an unnatural wildness in his eyes:—they appeared almost bursting from their sockets. He thrust his right hand into his bosom, apparently searching for something, and presently he drew forth from his vest a small golden-backed miniature; I was unable to perceive the painting: then he re-seated himself, holding out the picture, and gazing most intently upon it, he muttered something, with lips scarcely opened. I hardly know what he said; a few words only were audible—“Leicester—Father—Son—atone-ment”—but little else. I had made up my mind to enter; I turned the handle of the door; it was locked from the inside.

I heard Delaval striding forward, and, as a natural consequence of my meanness, I became alarmed, and my limbs trembled. It struck me on a sudden that I had framed no excuse for my intrusion. Would to heaven, I thought, that the earth would open and receive me! I was entirely destitute of resources in this critical emergency. I had been so little accustomed to simulation, that, now there was occasion for a lie, I was altogether incapable of inventing one. I would have

willingly made my escape, but I knew that I must be detected in doing so, and my alarms rooted me to the ground. Presently the door opened; Delaval stood before me. My tongue was without power, unable to perform its functions. I stood silent and trembling.

"Jerningham! what do you here? Do you want any thing? — Come here!" and he literally dragged me into the room, for the faculty of voluntary exertion was entirely suspended within me. I heard the lock of the door grating; Delaval had turned the key.

"Now, boy! tell me what you want. Speak, sir!—by God, you are tampering with me!" The manner of the usher was wild and fearful. He appeared bursting with choler.

On a sudden I recovered my self-possession, and spoke. I had already grievously committed myself. It was all over; the spot of dishonour was on my brow; the brand of infamy had marked me; I was tainted with a moral leprosy, which nothing could eradicate from my soul. I was a being lost in the ocean of self-contempt,—a mark for the finger of scorn,—a spy, detected in his meanness. The action which had done all this was committed, and I could not undo it. It was irretrievable, chronicled in the pages of the past; and contemplating this, I felt relief. I did not

seek to exculpate myself—I abandoned my soul to a sense of desolation; and I was quite tranquil and composed.

“ Mr. Delaval, I am in your power. I have nothing whatever to say. I am unaccustomed to tell falsehoods. You must despise me beyond measure; I despise myself; but I would not add to the load of self-contempt which oppresses me by telling a deliberate lie. Deal with me as you will: I expect, I deserve, no mercy. I have intruded myself upon you in a manner most unwarrantable; I have been mean enough to pry into your actions. My conduct has been in the highest degree contemptible. I have given way to the most miserable curiosity. I am altogether unworthy of clemency. Mr. Delaval, deal with me as you please.”

“ Jerningham! sit down. You are young, and have committed an error. Nay, do not interrupt me. I forgive you, cordially and entirely. Your own feelings, I am sure, will be sufficient atonement for your fault. Let this be a warning to you, my boy, never to pry into the affairs, and above all the misery, of others. Never attempt to raise the veil which sorrow has thrown over its face, to conceal it from the eye of the vulgar. Look upon affliction always, my boy, as a sacred thing. Where you cannot alleviate misfortune, do not

have the impertinence to interfere. When you hear the voice of lamentation and feel yourself unable to console it, pass by the house from which it issues, and intrude not your irrelevant curiosity. Stripling as you are, you are capable of inflicting pain; sorrow revolts at vigilance; sorrow is too holy to be trifled with, to be vexed with impertinent intrusions. Remember this lesson, my boy; I have suffered much, as you perceive; but you are too young to be my confidant. I forgive you for what you have done; but beware of rousing me a second time. Jerningham, I am not to be tampered with."

I was astonished at the temperance of this address. But a moment before, Delaval had been all energy and wrath; frantic, violent, and impatient; now he was calm, dignified, and gentle; nothing could be kinder than his manner. So rapid was the change from the tumultuous to the serene, that had I not witnessed it myself, I should scarcely have regarded it as credible. I anticipated, if not some violence of action, certainly a violent reprimand. I never was more mistaken in my life. There was an unwonted degree of kindness in his tones, an unwonted aspect of calmness in his face. I retired from the presence of Delaval with increased respect, and at the same time with increased curiosity. I resolved, however, to set a

seal upon my scrutinies,—to take warning from what had passed already. The incidents of this morning I had sufficient motives never to divulge, for my own crimination must have been involved in any recital of what I had seen. Delaval knew this, for he said not a word about secrecy; and, in sooth, I really believe that without any other inducement, a respect for those feelings I had tampered with—for that sorrow which I had so wantonly made a sport of—would have checked any propensity to make known the melancholy scene I had witnessed—the sad state of poor Delaval's mind.

No sooner had I entered the school-room, than Leicester and Sinclair came running up eagerly to accost me. The former seized me by the hand: "My dear fellow," said he, "how can I thank you for fighting my battles so gallantly? Sinclair and you are deserving of my eternal and sincerest gratitude. By the Lord, it was a ridiculous affair; but I wish—oh, how I do wish! that I had been there myself; my gorge rises as I think of the insults that have been passed behind my back:—a set of envious, heavy-minded churls! But it is not too late yet! I am determined—"

"Remember your promise; remember your promise!" said Everard.

"What do you think, Jerningham? Sinclair

has exacted a promise from me that I will not challenge Evans to fight, nor give Brown a sound beating. I really am half inclined to quarrel with my orator and champion for this; and yet, what could I say? could I refuse any thing to him? — particularly as the sly rogue took care not to tell me the nature of his request, before he made me promise to grant it. I wish, Jerningham, that you would persuade him to absolve me from the promise he extorted from my ignorance of what he was to ask.—My good fellow, what on earth makes you look so sorrowful?”

“Oh! nothing; nothing whatever,” said I; and endeavoured to look as easy as possible; but I fear it was a sorry attempt, for grief weighed heavily at my heart, and spite of the congratulations of Leicester, and the joy-infusing presence of Everard, I could not sufficiently shake it off.—“Oh! nothing is the matter, I assure you; I was only thinking of your renewing the quarrel, and stirring up the fires of contention, which I had hoped, were smothered in the school. Leicester, believe me; you must let the matter drop here. However unpleasant it may be to your high spirit to endure this in silence, it is wiser, it is better, that you should do so. I must join my entreaties to Everard’s; and if I am not very woefully mistaken, a third person will very soon conjure you to

follow a similar course. Leicester, I rest satisfied that you will follow the advice we give you in all sincerity of heart, and in all singleness of purpose. I think that we have a right to expect that you will not deny us this."

"I am afraid that it must be so. And yet I would forfeit my right hand sooner than suffer that Evans to go unthrashed."

CHAPTER VI.

Fearless he was, and scorning all disguise ;
What he dared do or think, though men might start,
He spoke with mild and unaverted eyes.

SHELLEY.

———— I have known him
Transported on a sudden into utterance
Of strange conceptions ; kindling into splendour,
His soul revealed itself.

COLERIDGE.

I HAD been three years at Dr. R——'s, when, at the approach of one summer vacation, I took it into my head, that I would ask my uncle to invite Everard Sinclair to spend the holidays with me at Heathfield. My request, I need hardly say, was unhesitatingly granted.

Everard was delighted at the prospect of happiness thus unfolded to his view ; but he seemed to doubt the success of an application to his stern-

hearted father. What is there that the spirit of contrariety will not induce a person to do?

However, we were mistaken. Mr. Sinclair, after a reasonable delay of two or three weeks, during which time Everard and I were stretched upon the tenter-hooks of suspense, responded that his son was "very welcome to go to the devil if he thought fit; for his part, he was very glad to get rid of such an incumbrance; he wished Mr. Jer-ningham well quit of his bargain; d—n him, he was quite sure that it would be heartily repented of ere long."

If I dwell upon these scenes of my boyhood with a prolixity which may not be pleasing to the more mature portion of my readers, I trust that the offence is of a nature which merits the readiest forgiveness. I dwell upon these scenes because the memory of them is fraught with delight. My pen lingers fondly and tenaciously upon these earlier stages of my history, which, compared with the events of my after-life, are as the holy calm of a summer's evening to the tumult, the uproar, the commotion of a desolating tempest in the North. There is a sufficiency of excitement in store: the skeleton-head will peep out soon enough; let us tarry, therefore, a few minutes longer, to contemplate one of the few placid scenes, which the compass of my narrative embraces.

Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe,
More woe the more your taste is now enjoyed.

Those were the happiest days of my life,—the days of that vacation at Heathfield. It was beautiful summer weather, and I was in the enjoyment of all that I could wish. I was then nearly seventeen years of age, and Everard was a few months my junior. That same age of seventeen, methinks, is, above all others, the season when life is most bountiful in its blessings. We then begin to be conscious of enjoyment; to know that we are really happy. Knowledge is just beginning to dawn upon us. The pleasures of the intellect are enrobed in all their freshest garments of beauty: and those of the affections are girt about with a glory which is bedimmed in maturity. We are standing, as it were, upon the bridge across the stream which separates the child from the man,—which passes from ignorance to knowledge. Life is replete with hope,—our bosoms glow with enthusiasm. We dream of futurity, and live in the midst of imaginary scenes. We know just enough of life to look upon it as a radiant thing, and to glory in our frail humanity. We know just enough to be happy. At seventeen we have arrived at a season of existence, which, above all others, is most

pregnant with enjoyment; equally remote as it is from the dull ignorance of childhood, and the desolating knowledge of maturity. Oh! that I could have made a stand there, and have advanced not a step further into the gloom of the valley of years!

The country about Heathfield was remarkably woody and picturesque. Considering its propinquity to the metropolis, the hand of the artificer had but little destroyed the natural beauties of the place. I had always derived infinite pleasure from a contemplation of the wondrous works of nature, and the mind of Everard was of a kindred turn, a circumstance which enhanced my delight. The luxuriance of scenery around the house of my uncle was therefore an unbounded source of pleasant thoughts in our young breasts; we would ride out together in the day-time, into the heart of a great wood, where, dismounting, we would fasten our horses to a tree, and lie down beneath the shadow of the foliage, pouring out into the ears of each other the innermost feelings of our hearts, — making strange conjectures of what would be our future destinies, — building up castles in the air, — and vowing to assist one another upon the weary road to fortune and fame. Our young imaginations rioted in the airy fields of fancied delights. It seemed to us a thing impossible that we should

ever be separated again. Why should we not journey through life hand in hand till our pilgrimage be ended? Why should we not finish our days as we had commenced them, and be companions to the last hour?

Everard was scarcely, I think, of so cheerful a disposition as myself; or, perhaps, I ought rather to say, that he was not of so *light-hearted* a nature. He was peculiarly tranquil and gentle,—the kindest, the most obliging, and the most forbearing of God's creatures. You could not but feel happy in his society; but it was a subdued feeling of happiness,—a quiet, harmonious sensation of tranquil delight, full of silence and repose,—a certain twilight of the soul, too deep for mirth,—too hallowed for excitement,—too beautiful to be very apparent. There was nothing boisterous or noisy in Everard's joy; he was never in that condition of mind which is usually designated *high spirits*. He was of too thoughtful a nature ever to exhibit much outward show of joy. I will not say that he was exactly foreboding; but when Everard Sinclair attempted to dive into the secrets of futurity, his soul did not recoil from those attempts with any very pleasurable emotions. The little of the future which he could read, or, rather, which he imagined he could read, was written in characters which portrayed a refinement of desolation and woe, of which

his mind shrunk from the contemplation. He knew that he would have much to endure; that suffering was written upon the scroll of his destiny; that the flowers of life bloomed not for him.

“Claude,—my dear Claude,” he said to me one day, after an unusual long silence of intense feeling, which I was in no mood myself to break through, “it is vain, it is more than idle, to talk of intertwining our future destinies,—of treading the journey of life, you and I, along the same path. I do not wish that it should be so. If it *were* possible, Claude, to interweave the threads of our fates, for my joys to be your joys, for my sorrows to be your sorrows,”—

“Oh! Everard, that would be too much happiness.”

“No, Jerningham; it would not be so: it would be too much misery. If such a dispensation as I speak of were to be granted, I would beseech the great Spirit of goodness to unravel the threads of our destinies; to suffer me to go upon my journey alone,—to tread the path of my existence in solitude. I feel that I am marked out as one who will have much to suffer. I know how to avoid that suffering; but I will meet it. I am content to forego all claims to a share of this world’s prosperity; but I cannot make a sacrifice of my principles: they, at all events, shall be unmuti-

lated. If there be any happiness in store for me, it will be a sense of having acted up to those principles."

"You speak vaguely, Sinclair; yet, methinks, I can guess at your meaning. To a stranger you would be unintelligible; but I,—I, who know you so well, have a slight knowledge of your meaning. Faintly and sadly the truth glimmers upon my reason; yet why do I say the *truth*? Those dark hints which you throw out are the distorted monsters of error,—of gloomiest self-delusion. Everard, believe me, that life will open her stores of happiness for you as for the rest of mankind. And who more deserving of happiness, who more worthy to be amongst the most blest?"

"Claude, unto your ear every feeling which stirs in my bosom shall ever be embodied in words. You already know my past history; you shall now know my present thoughts. I have frequently been called an atheist; I have been reviled as a blasphemer, and a heathen. I am *not* an atheist: I am *not* a blasphemer: I am *not* a follower of Antichrist. But I know that it will often be my lot to be assailed with these contumelious expressions.—I know that, as I go upon my pilgrimage, the finger of scorn will be uplifted to point at me as an enemy of mankind; as an offender against, and a disclaimer of, God. I have girt myself with the

armour of endurance, and am prepared to meet the assaults of the world. And why am I doomed to suffer this? It is because I dare to think for myself,—to differ from the constituted authorities, and, therefore, from the rest of the world, upon matters of polity and religion. I am certain that the world as it is cannot be regarded with complacency by God; that the great Spirit of beauty and goodness, who presideth over all things that are, cannot smile upon the institutes of his people, nor be pleased at the mighty profanation of his laws, which priests and legislators commit, when, treading in the paths of error, and hoodwinked by custom and tradition, they falsely interpret his mandates, and act in direct opposition to the spirit of the revelations he has made. This, Jerningham, is what I think; this is the very essence of my offence. Yet for this I have been called an ‘atheist:’ for this I am doomed to be persecuted.”

“My dear Everard,” I replied, “persecution will not wait on you for entertaining, but for professing, these heterodox opinions. Why need you divulge to the world all the thoughts which enter into your brain? Why not have the prudence to be silent, when you know that there is danger in uttering those thoughts?”

“Because it would not be honest;—because it would be playing an hypocrite’s part;—because it

would be the conduct of a coward. With me, to think is to say; with me, to say is to act. Claude, I am not so worldly-minded as to sit down in silent inactivity, with such thoughts as these agitating my bosom. The world ought to be happier than it is. War, and all its concomitant evils; slaughter, famine, and desolation; tyranny now rising out of fear; now springing, a monstrous child, out of the womb of a monstrous mother, whose name is bigotry, and whose acts have peopled the world with a myriad of crimes:—avarice, rapine, lust of power, and a thousand other evils I could mention, are the fruits of a social system, whose pillars are pillars of error, based upon hereditary superstition, and supported by grovelling selfishness. Much of this might be amended,—much of this calamity nullified. To remove the film which so long has obscured the visions of the people,—to teach them they have been in error, is the first step towards the inculcation of truth; but this is a task of difficulty. Prejudices take deep root in the minds of the ignorant and the sordid; to clear away the earth and rubbish which conceals the treasure of gold, is a labour of time and peril,—a labour which few will undertake, and which requires the exertions of many to perform.”

“Then what avails it to attempt, single-handed,

a task which must be performed by a combination of power? It were madness to sacrifice yourself, when no good is to arise from the immolation."

" 'No good,'—nay, I said not that. Though I cannot do the whole work, perhaps I may do something towards it. If I succeed in removing one stone which conceals the golden treasure of truth, I shall not have laboured in vain; I shall not have made a bootless sacrifice. Others have been before me at this labour; others will succeed me in the task. The rubbish of error will be cleared away at last; and the glory of the precious metal will, some day, glitter in the eyes of the world. I must not remain inactive, because I am powerless to do all that I could wish to do. He is a fool who refuses to illumine the lamp, because it equals not the splendour of the sun."

Then, after a pause, he continued,—“ My friend, the hardest trial I have undergone,—the hardest trial I have still to undergo,—is the misery of being reviled as an atheist. That I, with a clear reason, and all my faculties in an unimpaired state,—enjoying a thousand blessings which emanate from Him,—with eyes to behold His wondrous works, and a heart to feel the beneficence of His dispensations, should deny His existence, and attribute the creation of this mighty universe to chance! I was reading, a few days ago, in one

of those inimitable essays, which that great master-mind of the Elizabethan age, Lord Bacon, has bestowed upon posterity, a sentence which I have treasured up in my mind, and which ought to be engraven in letters of gold over the portals of every man's understanding : " God never wrought miracles to convince atheism, because his ordinary works convince it." Here, in a single sentence, is the very root and kernel of Natural Theology. And what a beautiful study is that, what a boundless source of contemplation to man ! The animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms,—how wonderfully is the organization of each adapted to the condition of humanity, and how perfect is the harmony of the three,—how delicately does the mechanism of each one accord with the mechanism of the other,—what " a wondrous whole" is this world, and yet, alas ! how our knowledge of it is circumscribed. The more we read in the book of nature, the more impressed we are with a certainty of a Creator."

" Oh ! Everard, my friend ; of a certainty thou art no atheist. Who can accuse thee of infidelity, when thou talkest in such a strain as this !"

" The earliest Christians, Claude, were regarded as the most impious atheists. To deny the gods, and to preach the word of the One God, was

deemed the most hideous blasphemy. Any secession from an established and hereditary religion is looked upon as unheard-of profanation. The Jew, the Mahommedan,—and the Christian are equally intolerant in this respect; and this, for the sake of the latter, I sincerely and deeply regret. The great revulsions which have taken place in the religious systems of the world, — the great changes in the ascendancy of different persuasions which have been engendered in the womb of time, ought to teach toleration to man, and to remind even the Christian that the time was when his faith was traduced. The religion which we profess,—the creed of the Nazarene, as it was called at its birth,—was very slow in gaining proselytes amongst those civilized nations, who believed in the Heathen mythology, and tenaciously clung to the polytheism, which they had inherited from their forefathers, and whose fanciful and poetical tenets they would not very readily abandon for the simple and unadorned faith of the meek and humble Messiah. It has been said, that the polytheistic religion, which divided into parcels the guardianship of the world, giving the tutelage of the rivers to one class of deities,—the tutelage of the woods to another,—and that of the flowers to a third,—making each particular work of nature consecrate to a peculiar divinity, was of a

beautiful and purifying nature, inasmuch as that it gave birth, in the soul of man, to a perpetual sense of the presence of a God, and, making every spot peculiarly sacred as it did, was likely to procreate in the breasts of its followers, a constant holiness of feeling, a never-dying devotion of heart. I grant that it is beautiful; but the faith of the true believer in the One God, methinks, is even still more lovely, and assuredly much more sublime. The heathens, when they objected against our creed, that it was hard, inornate, and ungraceful, betrayed a profoundness of ignorance. The simple is the true source both of the beautiful and the sublime. As I said, the true believer in the one God, recognizes in every individual work of nature, the presence of the Deity he adores. In every flower of the garden,—in every tree of the forest,—in every stream of the valley,—the ubiquity of God is apparent. The trace of His hand is upon every leaf,—the breath of His nostrils is over the face of the universe. In the depths of the ocean,—on the crest of the mountain,—in the blue firmament,—He is there. In the cup of the flower,—in the dew-drop upon the grass,—in the hollow of the reed,—He is there. One and the same God throughout all space,—omnipresent. Is there no beauty; no sublimity in this? What are the nymphs and dryads,—what are the multifa-

rious deities of Greece and Rome, with all the petty passions of men and the powers of gods to satisfy those passions, heedless of the happiness of men,—to the glory of the One God, who is *every where*, and whose benevolence is unbounded as his power?”

But I am not writing a treatise of theology. I wish but to record here a specimen of my friend's conversation. The reader will see that it is imbued with all the enthusiasm of a young thinker, and all the devotion of a believer in God. I have been egotist enough to suppose that the discourse which *I* listened to with pleasure, must of necessity be interesting to the *reader*. But I fear that the graces of the speaker are lost in the pages of the historian.

CHAPTER VII.

Oh! thou hast damnable iteration, and art indeed able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal. God forgive thee for't! Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked.

SHAKESPEARE.

It was about the middle of the month of July, and my uncle was absent on the circuit, when one day as Everard and myself were enjoying the cool air beneath the verandah, which shadowed the house, we saw a Stanhope approaching the door, and recognized the driver to be no other than our friend Harry Leicester.

We were both of us delighted to see him. My brother Frederick was fortunately not at home, so that his presence stood not in the way of our happiness. Since the day upon which Sinclair and I

had taken upon ourselves to vindicate Leicester's conduct, and had exposed ourselves to danger for his sake, the latter had been frequently in our society, and had conceived a vehement attachment towards us both. He told us before the vacation commenced, that he would certainly pay us a visit before the close of it, and we had been expressing our astonishment at not having seen him but a few hours before he arrived. Leicester was in remarkably high spirits; he had thrown off all that studious reserve to which I have alluded in a former chapter of my book; and had reassumed his genuine character; he talked,—he laughed,—he jested,—he had a fund of anecdote at his command,—his discourse was varied and sparkling,—his wit unusually poignant. I thought that I had never associated with so delightful a companion in my life. The subdued gentleness of Everard Sinclair appeared sickly and vapid in my eyes, when compared with the graceful vivacity of the more thoughtless and sprightly Harry Leicester. But the glory of the latter was that of the lightning, whose flashes we admire for a season, and which are beautiful because they are brief; the light of the former shone ever meekly, like the rays of the sun, which ages cannot render wearisome, and whose blessings we do not sufficiently estimate, because they are eternally lavished upon

our heads. Of Everard's companionship I never should have wearied ; of Leicester's a few days would have disgusted me. Those joys which are least apparent, are always, methinks, the most lasting.

Leicester proposed that one or other of us should take the vacant seat in his Stanhope, and accompany him upon a visit to the metropolis. Everard at once declined the offer. "For my part," he said, "I hate London. What charms does the mighty city hold out to seduce me from this beautiful country ? What is there so attracting in that vast lazar-house of human infirmities, that I should abandon so sweet a spot as this, even though it be but for a single hour ? No, no, Leicester, I had rather remain where I am. Perhaps Claude may think differently, but I am perfectly contented at Heathfield. 'God made the country, but man made the town ;' and I always feel unhappy in London, for I am reminded too sensibly, when there, of the profusion of sin and sorrow which defiles the fair face of creation ; and converts this beautiful world into a storehouse for all that is most vile."

"Well reasoned, Philosopher-General," replied Harry Leicester, laughing as he spoke. "When you come the Stoic over me, Everard, I am silent ; I have nothing to say ; for I am afraid that my Epicurean doctrines would meet with little favour

from you. However, if I prophesy not falsely, you, Claude, will leave your friend for a day, and dip into the 'lazar-house of impiety,' notwithstanding Sinclair's philippic, and the rural delights he is so enamoured of. Come, Jerningham, fill your carpet-bag, and leave Everard to write pastorals."

I certainly had "a month's mind" to accept Harry Leicester's invitation. I was not so enamoured of the country as not to be able to desert it for a day; and though naturally of a quiet disposition, I was not averse from an occasional freak,—a transitory digression from the monotony of existence, which generally is salutary in its effects. I hesitated before I spoke the word; I pondered upon the propriety of what I was about to do; and determined that at all events the safest course was at once to decline the invitation. But there was no very great harm, to be sure, in paying a visit to the metropolis; if my uncle were at home, undoubtedly he would give me full permission to go; but my uncle was *not* at home; and should I not commit a breach of confidence by taking advantage of his absence? Such were the thoughts which suggested themselves, and of such was composed the answer which I returned to Harry Leicester's petition.

"I applaud your motives, my good fellow," returned the young scion of nobility; "but these

objections are easily obviated ; so that if you have none other, get ready immediately to start."

"How so?" I inquired.

"Tell your uncle what you have done directly he returns from the circuit ; and that will set your conscience at rest."

My objections, which were not very deeply rooted, vanished before the sophistries of Leicester. I did not seek to inquire into the strength of his casuistical arguments. I was contented to adopt them as they were, and paused not to scrutinize their legitimacy. I was glad enough to banish reflection, for a little thought would have told me, that a determination to confess an error justifies not the commission thereof. But they who *want* an excuse for doing wrong are not very particular about it, but adopt the first which presents itself without investigating its merits, or stopping to ascertain its cogency. Like the wolf in the fable, who desired a pretext for slaying the innocent lamb, no sophistries are too ridiculous for us, when we are anxious to gloss over our errors. We endeavour to cheat ourselves, and then boast of the purity of our intentions.

I consented to accompany Harry Leicester ; and, in a few minutes after I had given my consent, I was whirled along by a fast-trotting horse upon the high road to the metropolis.

I asked my companion, as we went, if his father were aware that I was about to visit him. This had not occurred to me before ; but, if Lord Leicester had not sanctioned the invitation of his son, I now felt that I should probably be unwelcome, and, if this were the case, I should feel highly annoyed myself at the idea of intrusion ; for no situation is more unpleasant than that of an uninvited guest.

Harry Leicester stared at me as I spoke. When I had done, he laughed vehemently, and appeared to be highly amused.

“What is the matter, Leicester?—my good fellow, what are you laughing at?”

“To hear you talk about my father! Why, man, he is an hundred miles off. Did you think we were going to see him? Lord Leicester is in —shire. I am out of his leading-strings by this time. I am living in London by myself.”

“You surely don’t mean what you say. Is it possible that Lord Leicester allows you to run wild in the metropolis by yourself? I don’t believe that you are much older than I am, and my uncle would not send me adrift, to stem the tide as I best could, without any helmsman to direct me.”

“Nor would my father if he knew it. Psha! you don’t think that Lord Leicester is up to my pranks? I managed it all capitally, I assure you.

I told him that I had received an invitation from you."

"From *me*?"

"Ay! you may start! Believe me, you are *particeps criminis*! Well, as I was going to say, I told my father that you had written to me with the full permission of your uncle, to invite me to spend a fortnight at Heathfield; and the governor, who knows your uncle by name, never doubting the truth of what I said, wrote me a check upon his bankers, and wished me a pleasant visit. So now you see, I am staying at the Clarendon; for I am very well known there, and they have offered to give me any amount of credit, but I don't think that I shall want it; and I am going to amuse myself for the fortnight; and my father will be none the wiser; and you, my dear Claude, are about to have a *lark* with me to-night!"

I was astonished at the extreme coolness,—the utter unconcern, with which Leicester spoke of his delinquencies. He alluded to his own dishonesty, as if it were a matter of no moment, and as if he thought that to tell a lie and to deceive an indulgent parent were the finest jokes in the world. For my part, I was rather shocked at this exposure of dishonourable conduct, and began sincerely to repent that I had consented to accompany him to London. My countenance assumed a serious

aspect ; and I said, in a grave voice, to my companion,—

“Leicester ! you may look upon all this as an excellent piece of fun ; but, believe me, that I do not. If I had entertained the slightest suspicion that you were not about to take me to your father’s, I assure you that I would have remained at Heathfield.”

“Tush ! tush !” resumed Leicester ; “what ! are you turned Puritan too ? It is as natural for boys to play tricks as for butterflies to wanton in the sun. It is the characteristic of youth to be thoughtless ; and I doubt not but that our fathers before us have done just the same as we are doing now. Surely, a little harmless amusement, which inflicts no injury upon any living creature, is salutary rather than beneficial. Psha ! what’s the use of looking serious ? One would think that I were persuading you to commit murder,—to burn down the Parliament-house,—or to perpetrate sacrilege at St. Paul’s ! But I will not carry you on against your will ; so speak the word, and I will turn back ; or, here is a coach meeting us, which goes within half a mile of your house ; so you have only to say, ‘stop !’ and, *presto !* you shall be on your way home.”

But I was not very well pleased to turn back. I had anticipated considerable amusement from my intended visit to the metropolis, and I was

not quite ready to abandon all thoughts of the relaxation I had promised myself. I hesitated, when Leicester suggested the facility with which it was possible for me to return. The promptitude, which I was called upon to exercise, had the effect of overthrowing my resolutions. There is something immeasurably startling in the idea of being immediately compelled to put our noble theories into practice, or to abandon them altogether. It is well enough to talk of what is right, and to think of some remote period when it is probable that we may execute our plans; but, to be told, ere the words are scarce uttered, "Now is your opportunity; do it: the season is at hand when you may prove your sincerity;"—to be taken thus promptly to our words disconcerts us, and unsettles our resolutions. Of the truth of this I was an eminent example; for I wavered, and hesitated, and doubted, when called upon to act with decision. It is probable that, if more time had been allowed me, I should have determined upon a different conduct; but the suddenness of Leicester's appeal unarmed me, and I suffered the coach to pass by.—"No," I said, "I will not turn back; I have gone thus far, and I retrace not my steps."

We reached the metropolis about dinner time—between the hours of six and seven. Leicester

drove up to the hotel, and ordered our meal to be served up immediately. He appeared to be well known by the waiters, for he called each individual by his name, and his orders were obeyed, as I observed, with a remarkable degree of alacrity. Our repast was served up on massive silver, and comprehended, to use a newspaper expression, "all the delicacies of the season." It was nominally "covers for two;" but there was enough for the mess of a regiment. Leicester was even more vivacious than he had been during his visit to Heathfield. The wine, which he freely imbibed, gave an additional raciness to his conversation. He touched upon all subjects which were likely in any way to interest me; and I, in turn, was not behind hand in acting my part of the dialogue. Leicester complimented me upon my sprightliness; he commended the sallies of my wit; and declared himself highly delighted, inasmuch as that I had listened to his advice, and had not been so silly as to return. The wine was peculiarly good, and I drank a much greater quantity than I had been accustomed to, without knowing that I had in any way exceeded. I was flushed and heated when I rose from the table, but my reason was not in the least degree unsettled; I was physically, not mentally discomposed; my body had received a slight shock,

though my intellectual energies were unaffected. I felt a slight oppression at my chest; and a heaviness about the regions of my forehead, which a bottle of Seltzer water had the effect of speedily removing. Leicester, more accustomed to the vinous fluid, was, in no measure, acted upon by what he had drank.

“Well, Jerningham,” exclaimed my companion, when I had declared my unwillingness to drink more, “if you really have had enough of this Burgundy, I propose that we make a start for the opera; this is the first night of the new ballet, and I would not miss it for a king’s ransom. By the bye though, we must sacrifice to the graces, a few minutes before we go forth. If you have not brought clothes enough to town, we are much of a height, and I can serve you.” And he rang the bell, for the chamberlain to show me the way to my apartment.

I had nearly completed my toilet, when Leicester entered the room. I should not have known him again. He had undergone a complete metamorphosis since we parted, and if he had not spoken, I should have regarded him as a perfect stranger. By the simplest contrivance in the world, he had so admirably stripped himself of his individuality, that a mother would not have recognized her offspring under the fictitious character he had

assumed. He had dressed himself in a complete suit of black, the coat of which was buttoned up to the chin, and surmounted by a stiff white cravat, above which appeared an inch or two of shirt collar, protruding on either side in advance of his chin, and forming an acute-angled triangle. In addition to this he had put on a pair of immense tortoise-shell spectacles, and had parted his hair down the centre, having straitened it as much as he was able, and plastered it with a profusion of pomatum. His whole figure now wore that starched and precise appearance, which fixes upon a man the name of "a prig," and which is more frequently to be met with amongst members of the medical and ecclesiastical professions, than amongst any other body of men. He put me in mind somewhat of Peregrine Pickle's travelling tutor, whom the genius of Smollett has immortalized. There was something about him sublimely eccentric, and I greeted the entrance of my friend with a roar of hilarious laughter.

"Why, my good fellow," I exclaimed, when I was sufficiently recovered to articulate, "in the name of Momus, what is the meaning of this? By all that is most frolicsome, explain the meaning of this disfigurement. If you had not said you were going to the opera, I should have thought that you were in character for a

masquerade. Why, you look, for all the world, Leicester, like Doctor Pangloss, in the days of his youth."

"I'll tell you all about it," replied my companion, "as we go along, for I see that you are ready. The fact is, that I happen to know a great number of people in London,—a multitude of my father's friends, whom I am not very anxious to be accosted by; and who, most of them being people of fashion, are likely to be at the King's Theatre to-night. Now, Jerningham, we will go into the pit; and there we shall be able to see audience and performance well enough,—to enjoy all that is going on, without running a chance of detection; for I defy the devil himself to find out Harry Leicester in this guise."

"Do you often appear in this dress?" I inquired, "or is this the first night of a new costume?"

"Whenever I wish to be unknown, I don the precisian immediately. In one or two places of public resort, I am known by the name of "the little Doctor." I have more than once passed by my father in this disguise, undetected; nay, once, when he fancied that I was in bed, I sat in the same box with him at a coffee-house, and had the courage to ask for a pinch of snuff; I never shall forget that evening; for I no more expected to

meet him, than he expected to meet his son. I'll tell you how it was, Jerningham. My Father."——

But the readers will dispense with Leicester's account of this *contre-temps*, which, although it amused me exceedingly at the time of its narration, has made no lasting impression upon my memory: so that the salt of the anecdote would be lost, if I were to attempt to resuscitate it in these pages. By the time that Leicester had finished his story, we found ourselves at the doors of the Opera House.

My companion seemed perfectly acquainted with every body worth knowing,—from the countess, in the seclusion of her private-box, to the meanest *danseuse* in the ballet, Harry Leicester appeared to know them all. The worshipful Asmodeus himself could not have been a more amusing chaperon. He had a story to tell about every one; a shrewd remark to make upon every thing. He informed me of all the several liaisons which existed between the different opera-girls, and certain titled gentlemen, whom he pointed out to me. He talked as if he had often been behind the scenes,—not only of the theatre, but also of domestic life. He knew, in fact, a great deal more than a stripling of his years ought to have known. He told me, that it was the best fun in the world

to attend the rehearsals of the Operas, and that if I would remain the next day in London, there was nothing easier than to get me admitted.

When the performances were over, I suggested that I should not be sorry to go to bed. But Leicester interrupted me immediately,—“*Bed!*—I promise you, my boy, that you go not to bed just now. I have many places to which I must escort you, before I shall suffer you to broach the subject of bed. You shall not, at all events, say that you have come up to town to see nothing; so we will e’en go and smoke a cigar; and take a cup of coffee at Gliddon’s; and by the time that we have despatched this business, it will be nearly time to betake ourselves to the ‘Cider Cellars,’—and there I will promise you a treat, if you have not enjoyed one already.”

When we had discussed our cup of coffee and our cigar, Leicester proposed that we should depart, to “wind up,” as he said, at the Cider Cellars. I have omitted to observe, that my companion no sooner had escaped from the precincts of the Opera House, than he divested himself of his spectacles, stripped off his preposterous shirt collars, threw open his coat, and tied on a black neckcloth; all of which he did, *en passant*, as we proceeded along the Strand; and, without quitting my side, he completely re-assumed his ge-

nuine appearance, and from an ineffable prig converted himself into a consummate gentleman. "These collars and this starched neck-cloth," he said, "are an outrageous annoyance; besides, although it has been said, that I possess the assurance of Beelzebub, I do not feel quite at my ease, when conscious that I am looking so ridiculous, I cannot help comparing myself to the fellow (of whom I was reading in the play*), who was exhibited by his companions *as a fish*. And I can assure you, that I have no desire to be grinned to death by a multitude."

My companion conducted me along one side of the square of Covent Garden; quitting which, we passed up a street, half of which we had already accomplished, when Leicester cried out "to the left," and we branched into a narrow alley,—a "no thoroughfare lane,"—the houses on each side of which maintained an extraordinary intimacy. My youthful Asmodeus informed me that this was called "Maiden Lane." "And here we are at the end of our travels,—enter and be refreshed,—so saying, he pushed open the doors of the cabaret, and continued,—"There, my brave fellow, down those stairs, and then up that other flight again," and he added something about

* Jasper Mayne's *City Match*.

“descent” and “ascent,” which was of such a nature that I will not repeat it.

I followed the directions of my mentor, and presently I found myself entering a room of considerable longitudinal dimensions, though with an utter disregard to proportion, exceedingly circumscribed in breadth. On either side of this saloon, or gallery, as more aptly it might be designated, were ranged a number of small tables intended for the accommodation of different parties, and covered with tumblers, glasses, small plates full of sliced lemon, basins of sugar, cruets, &c.; all the multitudinous little furnitures of a tavern. At the further end of the room, was a table transversely situated, at which the host presided in person, regulating the songs, keeping order, and enforcing the obedience of the waiters. At the other extremity of the room, near the entrance, was a table appropriated to the glee-singers, who were keeping their voices in tune by repeatedly moistening their lips with a certain white beverage, which might pass off for water, or, indeed, for *any thing else!* The tables at the upper end of the saloon were mostly occupied already, and the others were rapidly filling as we entered, and augmented the party. There was a greater degree of order observable than I had expected to meet with in such a place, and I was rather agreeably surprised as I

noticed the respectability of the visitors. The reader will be mistaken if he imagines that I was enabled upon first entering to make myself acquainted with the contents of the room, and to possess myself of that knowledge which the foregoing description evinces ; for when I first opened the door, I saw nothing whatever but dense smoke, through which my vision was unable to penetrate, until time had accustomed me to the atmosphere of the room. There was scarcely an individual in the “cellar” who was not enjoying the “roguish tobacco,”* under some modification or other ; and as the apartment was not very lofty, and ventilated by only one or two small windows, the smoke had collected so profusely, that we might almost be said to have moved amidst solid clouds, rather than through the thin air of our own terrestrial regions.

I accompanied Leicester, at his desire, to the upper extremity of the room. The reader is by this time aware that I have conducted his imagination to the Cider Cellars,—that celebrated classic retreat, now, alas ! fast sinking into insignificance, which “the first Grecian of his day,” Richard Porson, delighted to honour, and where many a better man than he has passed an occasional night

* Ben Johnson.

harmlessly,—if he has repented not next morning. My companion, as I was about to observe, threaded his way along the avenue of tables, and, having reached the upper seat of all, whence the President of this worshipful society dispensed his laws, like a monarch to his subjects, Leicester shook hands with “mine host,” took a vacant chair on his right hand, and motioned to me to be seated. My friend had evidently resorted to the Cider Cellars, time after time, before this.

“You see, Jerningham,” said he, “that after all I have not introduced you amongst the rogues and sharpers, whom you spoke of. The company which frequents these rooms, as you see, is eminently respectable. Look you, not many tables off I see the Marquis of Q——, and by his side is Lord P——; they, I assure you, are constant attendants. Do you see the men to whom I allude?”

I cast my eyes in the direction towards which my attention had been diverted. “Do you mean that man in the cloak? Why, Leicester,—yet surely it cannot be,—how like that person is to Delaval.”

The cheek of Harry Leicester was suddenly dyed with a crimson hue. No dissembler, however astute, can control the spontaneous excursions of his blood. The tide of life, as it rushes through the multitudinous veins and arteries of our bodies,

and mantles in the human countenance, making it an unerring index of the mind, tells many an unbidden story, which we would fain not betray to the world. I saw plainly enough that my companion had marked the figure of the man whom I indicated.

“Nonsense! nonsense!” he replied; “Delaval here! it is ridiculous! I should as soon think of seeing his Majesty here or his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.”

“Nevertheless, I am sure it is he;” and as I said this, the individual, to whom I alluded, rose suddenly from his seat, and folding his cloak around his form, although it was the middle of the summer, and the atmosphere of the room was remarkably close, prepared hastily to depart in manifest confusion of mind. I had no more doubt that I looked upon Delaval, than that Leicester was sitting by my side. His countenance was of no ordinary stamp; once seen, it was not to be mistaken. Nature had marked the individuality of his face with lineaments peculiarly distinguishing; and those remarkable characteristics of feature, or rather, I should say, of form and expression combined, I had studied too often myself, upon this occasion, to be deceived as to their identity. I entertained a deeply-rooted conviction that Mr Delaval had just quitted the room.

Here then my inquisitive mind naturally began to distract itself; and to ask a variety of questions to which I was totally unable to respond. What could have brought Delaval to a place of this nature? What was there in such a situation as this which at all harmonized with his sensitive disposition? What attractions could a tavern hold out to a mind so constituted as Delaval's? What could there possibly be in these scenes of boisterous revelry and unrefined riotous mirth to accord with the tremulous, delicate feelings of the usher, which shrank from all noisy excitement, and which revolted at any thing sensual? What charms,—what allurements, could there be in an obstreperous and unintellectual crowd, to entice the unsocial scholar from the silence and solitude in which he delighted? The more frequently I asked myself these questions, the more incompetent I felt myself to answer them. That I *had* seen Delaval I was confident; I could not have laboured at the time under any delusion of mind. If the person I had seen was not the usher, why then was the cheek of Leicester crimsoned as he looked upon the man? A stranger could not have awakened so sudden a display of feeling in my friend. Again, it was certain that the individual, towards whom I had directed the attention of my companion, was overwhelmed with confusion and dismay, when he saw

that he was the object of our scrutiny. He had suddenly taken his departure, under manifest symptoms of inquietude, and had displayed an extraordinary anxiety to disguise the lines of his figure, as he passed down the centre of the room. I had distinctly seen the face of the man, as he sat there with his head uncovered; and my discernment was of that order which might warrant a rational conjecture that the phrenologists' organ of individuality was eminently conspicuous in my head. I was not a person to be mistaken about the identity of anybody I had once seen, and Delaval was the last in the world who was likely to elude my sagacity. So that, however unaccountable might have been his appearance, I could not question the accuracy of my senses; and they unhesitatingly informed me that I had seen Mr. Delaval at the Cider Cellars.

“Come, Jerningham,” exclaimed Leicester, seeing that I had become suddenly thoughtful, and wishing to divert the current of my thoughts from the channel which he knew that they had entered, “we are sitting here doing nothing, with empty glasses before us; nothing to eat,—nothing to drink: we don't come here to be idle. What is your favourite beverage, my boy; and what will you have by way of supper? Here, waiter; quick, you dog! Kidneys, and port-wine negus

for two." Then, turning round to our president,—
"Mr. —, will you give us a song?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. —, "when the waiters have taken their orders."

And in a few minutes I heard a song, which more than compensated for the head-ache of the next day; and that is saying a great deal for the singer.

The rattling of an hundred glasses ringing upon the thumped tables manifested the applauses of the community. The approbation expressed at the excellence of the song was of the most tumultuous and uproarious nature. The noise of the president's hammer, calling to order, was drowned in this whirlpool of clamour. Silence, however, was restored at length, though only to be broken through immediately; for a Babel of voices now arose, calling out discordantly for "goes of brandy;" "kidneys;" "Welsh rabbits," &c.; which lasted for several minutes. When the several claimants for victuals were supplied with what they wanted, the whole assembly, intent upon eating and drinking, exhibited remarkable decorum. Presently, Mr. —, the last singer, who, as I have before remarked, was our president and host, addressed himself to my companion, and said, "Mr. Leicester, will you favour us with a song?"

My friend, not in the least abashed, assented

immediately to this request; and the president's hammer sounded on the table, whilst he called out with a loud voice, "Silence, gentlemen, if you please, for a volunteer."

"A volunteer!" "Silence, for a volunteer!" was echoed from every quarter of the room; and Leicester, with admirable taste, and with a skillfulness which I little anticipated, modulating a rich, clear voice of considerable compass, poured forth a bacchanal song.

Again the tables were smitten, and again the glasses rang on the tables. The uproar which accompanied Leicester's song exceeded all the previous notes of applause; not so much on account of its super-excellence, as on account of the increased generosity of the party, which sensibly became warmer, as the night, or rather the morning advanced.

I will not detain my reader much longer in such desperate society. I will not dwell upon each song that was sung; upon each bowl of wine that was discussed.—I will not tell him how glasses were broken, how liquor was spilt on the floor; how one man became quarrelsome in his cups; how another dropt off fast asleep, pillowed upon his neighbour's shoulder; how nothing would satisfy a third but to stand on the table, or try at it, whilst he roared out the national anthem. Suffice

it that I got very drunk. For the first time in my life, I overleaped the barriers of sobriety, and plunged into the slough of intoxication. For the first time in my life, I sank to the level of the beast, having suffered my reason to be dethroned, and having lost all that elevates the man. I cannot say that I was "overtaken by liquor;" for I felt myself gradually growing worse. I knew that my senses were deserting me; but a kind of infatuation had seized upon my judgment, and I went on, though I knew what would follow. I said to myself an hundred times, "I am drunk; I know it well enough; I am in a state of degrading intoxication:" but still I emptied the bowl, still I replenished the wine cup. I have not a very distinct recollection of what passed during the last hour's debauch; I only know that we remained till nearly the last; for I remember that the room was almost deserted when we quitted it, and that it was broad day-light when we emerged into the streets. How we contrived (for Leicester was almost as far gone as myself,) to find our way to the hotel, I know not: I imagine that we entrusted our bodies to the care of a hackney-coachman, who delivered us over to the porter of the Clarendon, and that thus we escaped incarceration. The last sensation which I remember, (for I had long been unconscious of what was passing around me,) was that of

a roaring, bellowing noise, as if a flood of mighty waters had been rushing through the cavities of my brain, which was painfully distressing, and of such a violent nature that, if unconsciousness had not speedily come on, it would have driven me almost into madness.

CHAPTER VIII.

Spite ! thou imposthume of aspiring hearts,
Whose nature is, that if the bag remain,
The wicked humours straight will fill again ;
I will lay open thee, and all thy arts.

FULKE GREVILLE.

WHEN my uncle returned from the circuit, I acquainted him with all that I had done. I told him that I had visited the metropolis, in the company of Harry Leicester. My brother, however, had anticipated me.

I pass over this circumstance lightly, (although I remember, that, trivial as it was, it occasioned a long train of reflections to flit over the surface of my mind,) because, it was followed, in a few days, by another incident of a similar nature, which has made a more lasting impression upon my memory,

and which, being more important, inasmuch, as others were concerned in the transaction, I purpose to record in these pages.

I had in my possession a little book, which had been given to me by Everard Sinclair. It was one of Diderot's singular novels,—I rather think, "James and his Master," translated into the English tongue, and containing some startling opinions on the subject of fatalism, &c. This little volume had been one of the earliest pledges of affection which I had received from my young friend; and I valued the book accordingly. My name was written on the title-page, connected with that of the donor, so that there was no mistaking the proprietor of the book, or the manner in which it had come into his possession.

The eye of my brother Frederick accidentally fell upon this book; he watched his opportunity, and, as an eagle darts upon his prey, he pounced upon the devoted volume. He bore it off in triumph, and placed it within the reach of Uncle Matthew, during the absence of Everard and myself. Frederick was fertile in contrivances; his schemes were laid with considerable skill, and answered, as far as he was able to regulate them, even better than he had himself anticipated. My uncle, in Frederick's presence, took up the book in question, and scrutinized it with an inquiring eye; a

cloud gathered upon his brow, as he placed the volume again upon the table, without uttering a word. My brother looked inquisitively into his uncle's face, expecting him to break the silence ; but in this he was disappointed, for Mr. Jerningham said nothing, but sat absorbed in thought, apparently of a serious nature. Frederick was anxious that his uncle should be the first to make some allusion connected with the volume in question ; but, seeing that the elder party was resolutely silent upon a subject which occupied the thoughts of them both, he determined, rather than lose such a golden opportunity, to throw out a pioneering remark, in a casual and unconcerned manner.

Frederick looked at the volume, apparently as though he had never seen it before ; and turning over a few of its pages, he said, in a careless tone of voice,—“ Uncle ; this is a strange work,—I wonder how Claude came by it ? ”

Frederick had committed himself already. He forgot that my uncle was a lawyer.

“ The same glance of your eyes, which has acquainted you that the book is your brother's, must have told you how it came into his possession, Frederick ; you do not wonder.”

But my brother was not disconcerted. “ True, uncle,” he replied, “ I spoke carelessly, I acknowledge ; I did not think what I was saying. But, it

is a very wild book; is it not? I have never seen it before?"

"I am not surprised," said my uncle.

"I suppose, sir, you know its contents. Diderot was an atheist; was he not?"

"I *am* acquainted," replied my uncle, mildly, "with the general nature of its contents: Diderot was a decided free-thinker upon all subjects of religion. I hesitate, however, before I decide upon the positive atheism of any man."

"I think, uncle," resumed my brother Frederick, emboldened by the last reply of his uncle,—"I have read that one of Diderot's works was condemned by the French Parliament to be burnt in the streets of Paris."

"You are right, Frederick," said Mr. Jerningham,—“the work you allude to was his *Philosophical Thoughts*, published, I think, in the year 1746."

"Were all Diderot's works of so pernicious a tendency?" asked my brother, gradually approaching, after some circumlocution, the point at which he was anxious to arrive.

"Not *all*;" replied my uncle, "for some of them being purely scientific, contain nothing offensive. But I think that I may speak in general terms, and say that every one of his works, which touches

upon religion and politics, is more or less of a mischievous nature."

"This little work," continued Frederick, "though professedly a fictitious narrative, seems to contain much offensive philosophy. It appears to me that a work is more dangerous, when the opinions embodied therein are conveyed through the medium of a history."

"You are right, Frederick; you are right; in proportion as a work is read, so is the mischief it produces; works of fiction are most popular, and, therefore, most pernicious. The book you hold in your hand, if I mistake not, has a tendency towards fatalism. But it is many years since I have read it, and I may probably be mistaken."

"Do not you think, uncle, that Claude ought not to read such books. A work of this nature must be dangerous in the hands of a boy."

"That depends," said my uncle, "upon the spirit in which he reads the book. In one respect, however, I admit the work to be dangerous. It *may* do harm—it cannot do good."

"And, therefore, it follows," returned Frederick, "that he had better not peruse these books."

"Books! you speak in the plural, has Claude many such works as this?"

"I do not know that he has," replied my

brother, "but Everard Sinclair —" and Frederick paused, apparently unwilling to go on, but in reality endeavouring to awaken more sensibly the attention of my uncle towards what he was about to say.

"But, Everard Sinclair.—Well, what of him?—But I will not extort information which you seem desirous to conceal."

My brother was dreadfully disappointed, but he had no notion of being thus easily baulked. "I was only about to remark, that Everard Sinclair, entertaining as he does, very strange opinions upon matters of religion, may possibly delude my brother into a belief similar to his own, and it would be a sad thing if poor Claude were to become an atheist like unto his friend."

"An atheist like Everard Sinclair! Frederick, you know not what you are saying."

"He was always thought an atheist at school," replied my brother, and having bolted out this assertion, partly true, partly false, as it was, he felt as though he had rid himself of a burthen which had lain some time uneasily upon his breast.

"I wish," said my uncle, "that you would learn a little Christian charity from him whom you condemn as an atheist." And he would have said much more, had not Everard Sinclair and I, at this moment, entered the room.

We came in search of the very book which had given rise to the above-recorded dialogue.

“ Frederick,” said Everard Sinclair, “ have you seen a little book of Claude’s, entitled ‘ James and his Master ? ’ ” But Frederick made no answer.

My uncle smiled a peculiar smile, as Everard continued : “ Mr. Jerningham, have *you* seen the volume in question ? It is a novel of Diderot’s, as you know. We have been looking for it all over the house—we left it this morning in the breakfast-room.”

“ Yes, Everard,” said my uncle, “ the book you are searching after is here. Do either of you know, my boys, how it came upon this table ? ”

I looked into my brother’s face, for I guessed immediately the nature of the conversation, which our entrance had accidentally interrupted. My brother quailed beneath my glance—his conscience suggested to him even more than my look purported.

“ It certainly is very strange,” said Everard, “ for we have not been in the room all the day.”

“ Then, I think I can guess very well how the book came upon the table,” and my uncle looked into Frederick’s face : “ however, it is of no consequence ; sit down, my boys, I have a word

or two to say before we part, in relation to this identical book." We did, as my uncle desired us to do.

"The most blameless actions," continued my uncle, "are subject to certain misconstructions. The same conduct differently interpreted may be dignified by the name of virtue, or degraded by the name of vice. To act rightly is one thing—to escape calumny is another. Actions are judged by the motives which have led to their perpetration, until their results are evident to the world, and then the cause is forgotten in the effect. But all the knowledge which we have of the motives, which propel a man to act, is conjectural, and, therefore, liable to be miscalculated. Thus, an individual is known to possess books, which society has determined to be pernicious to the welfare of the community. He is known to peruse such books, and his conduct is canvassed by others: his motives are either pure or corrupt; he may read a mischievous work with mischievous intentions, or with every possible intention of benevolence; he may read it to increase his knowledge of the truth, by acquainting himself with the deformity of error; he may read it in order that he may learn to contradict its arguments, and by acquainting himself with the reasonings of his adversaries, be armed

at all points to resist any attacks which may be made against the faith he professes. Thus Bp. Berkeley vanquishes the Free-thinkers, by first stating and then demolishing, their arguments. It would be unreasonable to declare a sovereign to be a tyrant, because he is known to peruse Machiavelli's *Prince*.

"I have thrown out a few general remarks by way of induction, my dear boys, to what I am about to say in relation to you individually. Here is a work which I hold in my hands, written by a French sceptical philosopher, which many men upon first beholding would unceremoniously throw behind the fire. This work bears on the title-page the names of Claude Jerningham and Everard Sinclair,—the one as the proprietor, and the other as the donor of this book. Prejudiced minds," and my uncle again looked into Frederick's face, "might take a malicious pleasure in inferring that you entertain similar notions with the author of this volume. However unjust and illiberal such an interpretation may be, I assure you that there are not wanting those who would place such a construction upon the possession of that book. My dear young friends, I now put it openly to you, how I am to interpret this circumstance?"

To this Everard immediately replied, that the

book had belonged to his mother,—that she had bequeathed it to him, and that he had given it some years ago to me.

“You will wonder, I dare say,” continued my uncle, “that I should lay so much stress upon the circumstance of your possessing this book; but I have been in a manner compelled so to do, for Frederick says that you, Everard, are an atheist, and that you were always esteemed such at school.”

My brother riveted his eyes upon the ground, and bit his nether lip vehemently. As for myself, I was so exceedingly indignant, that I should have so far forgotten the scriptural admonition, as to have called my brother an impudent liar, had not Everard Sinclair calmly made answer, that there was some truth in what Frederick had said, though he hoped that the opinion alluded to as prevailing at Dr. R—’s, was far from being universally entertained.

There was a candour,—an ingenuousness in this confession which displayed to peculiar advantage the single-heartedness and the patient charity of my friend. But it grieved my uncle to hear this confession: it was so like an avowal of infidelity.

“And is the boy really then an unbeliever?” thought he; and a question judiciously put soon elicited the desired information.—Everard, thus betrayed into speaking of himself, entered unre-

servedly into an exposition of his opinions, which the reader being already acquainted with, I scarcely need repeat in this chapter.

My uncle listened to what Sinclair had advanced without interrupting him for a moment. Now and then a faint smile passed across and animated his countenance, as I have seen a sudden and transient rush of light illumine the surface of the landscape. But he uttered not a single word ; he sat wrapt in deep attention, and his fine face betrayed an unwonted intensity of thought. When Everard ceased from speaking, my uncle, as was ever his custom, when he had any thing of moment to say, passed his hand hurriedly athwart his brow, threw back the scattered hair which had gathered upon his forehead, and spoke somewhat to the following effect :—

“ Everard Sinclair, you have won my heart ; the frankness and sincerity you display have irresistibly enchained my affections. The account which you give of your feelings is so honest and ingenuous, that I cannot but admire and commend the spirit in which you have divulged your sentiments, though I grieve for the sentiments themselves. You will ask me *why* I should grieve ? I answer ; not because your opinions are reprehensible, but because they are fraught with danger to yourself. I grieve because the philosophy you have adopted will ex-

pose you to a multitude of worldly evils. You will not thank me for saying this; you will tell me that you are superior to such paltry considerations; you will declare that you are ready to sacrifice yourself devotedly upon the shrine of a principle. I have nothing but the old answer of expediency to offer to this. Truth is so excellent a thing, that the search after it ought not to be abandoned, though the way be over sharp flint-stones. But you must remember how difficult it is to discern truth from error; to separate the pure gold from the base counterfeit metal. Another day, I shall be glad, with your permission, to enter more fully into the details of your doubts, and scruples, and opinions. You acknowledge that you are willing to receive light from any quarter of the world; therefore, I doubt not but that you will listen to *me*.

“Everard, you are still a boy. I do not hesitate, however, to acknowledge that your intellect is incommensurate with your years. It would have been better, far better, for your happiness, if you had been of a less thoughtful nature,—if you had been contented to look upon the world as boyhood usually regards it. But over this you have had no control. Your mind is of a restless and inquisitive order,—unsatisfied with the superficial, and acknowledging not the sovereignty of custom. You are determined to think for yourself,—to form your

own estimate of truth, and to regulate your conduct accordingly. Regarding this as an abstract question, there can be no doubt of the propriety of your resolutions. But as the world is, my dear boy, something must be ceded to authority,—some power must be granted to custom,—some efficacy allowed in establishments. If every succeeding age were to frame a new system for itself, the world would incessantly be in that state of confusion which is inseparable from the commencement of a new undertaking after the entire demolition of an old one. You say that society is badly organized, meaning thereby that the civil and religious establishments of the country are corrupt, imperfect, and injurious to the happiness of the community. Nobody seeks to deny a proposition so evident as this. Society must be imperfect whilst the individuals composing that society are themselves imperfect and corrupt. The defective condition of the world is the consequence of the fallen state of man. Those establishments are not the best which are abstractedly the most excellent, but those which are adapted, most expediently, to the condition of man as he is. To impose laws, either moral or civil, in their highest state of perfection, upon an abject and degraded people is as ridiculous and destructive as to attempt, into a grovelling and untutored mind, to instil the doctrines of a subtle philosophy. By

attempting to do too much nothing whatever is effected. The metaphor of the new wine and the old bottles is peculiarly applicable to this.

“ But you will say, that it is your main object to improve the moral condition of man ; to raise him a few spans above his present degraded state ; to lead him a few steps upon the road of improvement ; and you say, with Helvetius, that the virtue of the individual is dependent upon the excellence of the government which controls the nation of which he is part ; and therefore, that to improve the individual, you must first of all re-organize the government. But since the existence of laws is consequent upon the existence of the people for whom those laws are constituted, it is assuredly more natural that an improvement in the constitution of the laws, should be consequent upon the improved condition of the people than that——”

I know not how long my uncle would have continued in this train, or how deeply his arguments might have involved him, had not his eloquence been suddenly checked by the entrance of a servant, who brought in a number of general post-letters, amongst which, was one of more than ordinary bulk, which I immediately guessed to be from India. Mr. Jerningham's oratory, on a sudden, was brought to a full stop. He told us that he had nothing more to say, and that we might

leave him, if we had no objection. Whereupon we took the hint and departed from his presence forthwith.

As the contents of that Indian letter related in a great measure to myself, I shall set them before my readers at the commencement of my next chapter. Or, as a short epistle to myself,—an epitome of my uncle's letter,—was contained in the packet to which I have alluded, for brevity's sake I shall transcribe this compendious document from the handwriting of my father.

CHAPTER IX.

But if for wrongs we needs revenge must have,
Then be our vengeance of the noblest kind :
Do we his body from our fury save,
And let our hate prevail against his mind.
What can 'gainst him a greater vengeance be,
Than make his foe more worthy far than he?—

LADY CAREW.

CLAUDE JERNINGHAM, THE FATHER, TO CLAUDE
JERNINGHAM, THE SON.

“My dear Claude,

By the time this letter will reach you, your mother tells me that you will be more than sixteen years old, and therefore you are fully of an age to pass an examination at the Company's College. I take it for granted you are prepared, or you have been studying at Dr. R——'s to no purpose.

You cannot be better provided for, than by being enabled to adopt the same profession which I have followed since I was your age; and if you are commonly prudent, when you are my age, you will be a rich man. Besides, I have another reason: in India you will be entirely removed from the *bad society* into which, I understand, you have fallen of late years. I need not enlarge upon this—*verbum sat sapienti*.

I have written to my old friend, Sir Arthur McArthur, upon this subject. The writership, for which I have applied, and which he has long promised, I doubt not will speedily be tendered. It is my wish that you should lose no time between the period of your receiving the nomination and your departure for the college at Haileybury. I have entered into particulars with your uncle.

I am, my dear Claude,

&c. &c.

C. JERNINGHAM.

My first exclamation upon reading this letter was,—“Good God!—my brother again.”—It was evident that he had been employing his infernal machinations to ruin me in the opinion of my parents,—that his devilish ingenuity had been at work to remove me altogether from his path; and to sacrifice my happiness upon the altar of his

fiendish revenge. He had triumphed, he had accomplished his purpose; and a sentence of exile had been passed upon me. A thousand conflicting passions warred in my troubled breast; but thoughts of retribution were paramount over all. I said to myself, "Shall I bow down meekly beneath a weight of insufferable wrong? Am I to smile, and cringe, and fawn upon the hand that has smitten me to the earth,—am I to kiss the foot which has trampled upon me? Am I to be all gentleness, and kindness, and forbearance, whilst another, laden with malice, spits upon me,—insults me,—grins at me? Am I to play the lamb whilst my enemy acts the serpent? Am I to be the very incarnation of patience and long-suffering, whilst my brother stalks abroad like the demon of revenge, and scouts me at every turn?—Am I to be scoffed and give no answer; am I to be stricken and make no sign; am I to be cursed and say 'Amen?'—No; no; I cannot bear it"—and, losing all controul over myself, I started from my seat, and rushed forward, my lips foaming, my hands clenched, in a paroxysm of violent anger. But there was a restraining hand upon my shoulder; I felt a power controlling me; I looked round, and there was Everard Sinclair. I had been unconscious that he was sitting beside me.

My fury suddenly abated when the sweet

voice of my friend sounded reproachfully in my ears,—“ Claude, what is the matter?—why so violently distempered. I looked into your face as you read that letter, and I was frightened. Your countenance has assumed an expression fearfully stern and ferocious,—your eyes glare wildly like the orbs of a wounded tiger. You are ill, Claude,—come; listen to me. Be pacified, and tell me what sudden madness has entered into your brain.”

“ Everard, read this, and then judge for yourself. Have I not reason to be angry? Look you, there, there, it is written and underscored—‘*bad society*’—and *you* are pointed at—*you*, Everard, and this is my brother’s doing. Good God! and is it not enough to distemper the equanimity of an angel? I am to be banished from my country and friends because I have made a companion of you, and because a malicious and envious brother has slandered you by an atrocious lie. Listen to me, Sinclair: I might have borne it—I might have endured exile—I might have suffered calumny, and all without uttering a word; but that you, my friend, my guardian, should share in my ignominy. Oh, no! If the forger of that black falsehood were ten thousand times my brother—”

“ Claude,” interrupted my friend, “ it is time that I should interpose a word. You know not what you are saying. You are delirious, and talk

like a madman. Your reason wanders, and you are about to utter fearful imprecations. You have been injured ;—so have I. You have been grossly maligned and insulted ;—I share in the condemnation. It is past ; it is irrevocable. Can we alter one tittle of what *has been* ? If your enemy were now writhing at your feet, would the insults you have received be diminished ? Claude, if you wish to heap up coals of fire upon the head of your maligner, *forgive him*. By seeking to avenge an injury, you put yourself on a level with him who injures you ;—by pardoning, you rise superior to him. Shall we so far forget our duty, as for one moment to think of retaliation ? Claude, Claude ! I grieve for you. You have forgotten *the sermon on the mount*.”

Could I resist such an appeal as this ?—Could I turn a deaf ear to such angelic admonitions ?—Could I foster satanic feelings in the presence of such a heavenly guide ? No ; my heart was softened ; the tempest of my passions calmed. I acknowledged the superior excellence of Everard’s gentle disposition. I stood, as it were, in the presence of a visitant from a more elevated sphere ;—I felt my own littleness, and I was abashed.

“ Everard, you are my better angel. Never in

my life have I felt the superiority of your excellence so much as now. I am a child in your hands, and you can mould me into whatever fashion you will. I will silence the dictates of my own evil disposition, and hearken only to the suggestions of your gentle and benevolent heart. How thankful ought I to be, who have such a virtuous monitor by my side. But, alas! how soon are we to be sundered,—sundered, perhaps, for ever.” And as I said this, I laid my head upon the shoulder of my friend, and a flood of repentant tears came to refreshen my scorched soul. I rose up “a better and a wiser man;” and the heart which, but a few minutes before, overflowed with the bitterness of hate, was now a temple of hallowed feelings,—an altar of love and forgiveness. I went out determined to endure, and to bow down meekly beneath the lot which awaited me.

If I were anxious to enlarge this narrative, the two next years of my life might furnish abundance of food for my discursiveness; but the further I advance in my narrative, the greater necessity I perceive for an occasional condensation of matter. I might tell the reader, at some length, how I parted with Everard Sinclair; how I received the nomination to Haileybury from Sir Arthur McArthur, Bart., Deputy-Chairman of the Hon.

United Company of Merchants trading to the East Indies; how I waited upon the said Sir Arthur, and tendered him my best thanks in acknowledgment of the favour he had conferred upon me, though I fairly wished him and all his honourable colleagues at the devil; how I was examined at the college, and *passed*; how I became a member of the said college, where I learnt political economy and Sanskrit, and refrained from smacking my whip in the triangle; how, after two years, during which time I worked like a galley slave, I took leave of the venerable establishment, having gained three medals, and twice as many prizes, by my industry. All this and much more I might dwell upon with great facility; but I refrain from so doing, for reasons which I have already divulged.

My college adventures might fill three reasonable chapters. I understand that there is some talk of abolishing this classic establishment at Hertford; the proprietors having no longer any further occasion for the same. They of course know best what they are about; but I am sorry to hear their intentions. The name of Haileybury is associated in my mind with many memorable exploits, the scenes of which were the neighbouring towns of Ware, Hoddesdon, and Hertford; myself and my companions the actors. I did at Haileybury pretty

much the same as the other students were accustomed to do; I smoked cigars, drank gin and water, drove a dog-cart, and ran in debt.

I corresponded with Everard, whilst at college; he informed me that since my departure, he and Leicester had increased their intimacy, although Mr. Delaval still appeared to exercise a spell over his youthful companion. Sinclair said, that he religiously abstained from making any allusions to this connection; he was not of a curious disposition, and, although at times perplexed and troubled, when contemplating certain circumstances which forced themselves under his notice, he never had inquired any farther, nor subsequently touched on what had passed.

I forgot to mention, in due place, that my uncle had exercised his discretion in removing Frederick from Dr. R——'s, at the same time that I was entered at Haileybury. It was his purpose to place my brother at one of the greater universities.

It was once my intention to record in these pages, the parting admonitions of my uncle, preparatory to my finally taking leave of him, but excellent and judicious and impressive as they were, and firmly as they are still rooted in my memory, their general tendency, though distinguished by the par-

ticular wisdom and benevolence of Mr. Jerningham, was necessarily in a great measure identical with that of almost every parting admonition which has been delivered under similar circumstances, since the superior sagacity of Great Britain first conceived the notable idea of legislating for one hundred millions of Asiatics, and of sending out young men as their executors.

CHAPTER X.

We are now
In London, that great sea, whose ebb and flow
At once is deaf and loud.

SHELLEY.

BUT before I abstract the imagination of the reader entirely from my European adventures, let me pause for a short period to speak of what befel me in London, a few weeks before I set sail for Hindustan; not that I have any thing very stirring to tell of, but that a little incident occurred at this time, which may serve in some small degree, to throw a light upon one or two of my characters.

I had been busying myself in our great metropolis with sundry preparations for my Indian voyage, when passing along one of its most crowded streets, my eye fell upon the graceful form and the

fair countenance of Everard Sinclair. How delighted we were to accost one another; we both of us forgot the business upon which we were bound, as together we threaded street after street, and wandered we scarcely knew whither.

Everard was on his way to school—to *school*—he was then eighteen years of age, and his mind was stored, not superficially with learning of various descriptions; but the will of a tyrannical parent condemned him still to follow his academical career, and the poor youth, though he felt deeply its mortifications, murmured not at his lot.

We spake of various things—of the past—of the future—of ourselves, or rather, of one another, than which there is no subject more delightful, when love exists between the speakers. We were happy, and yet we were sad, for we felt painfully conscious that this would be our last meeting. We passed from one street to another; it was a matter of indifference to us whither we strayed, as long as we parted not from one another. The stir—the Babel of the great city—the multitudes which, like a great river, flowed by us, were as nothing; we heeded not the commotion, we saw not the crowds which surrounded us. We were most delightfully abstracted from the concerns of the busy world.

We passed on, and took no note either of time or of place. I know not whither we might not

have wandered, if a shrill voice crying out—"Charity—charity," had not suddenly smote upon our ears. I am not sure that I should not have passed onward, had not Everard Sinclair stood still. Never had an appeal of this nature been made to his gentle heart in vain.

We looked up, and I found that we were in a strange and somewhat unfrequented part of the metropolis, but my companion ever alive to the voice of poverty, saw nothing but the pauper before him. It was a woman attired in the filthiest rags, with unkempt hair and an unclean countenance, who had addressed us with the cry of "charity," and who now intercepted our progress, making the most importunate gestures. She was invested with all the legitimate insignia of mendicity—a tattered gown—a broken bonnet—one soleless shoe, and a profusion of dirt on her face and hands,—filth, I know not for what reason, being always regarded as a badge of poverty, even in places bordered by the ocean, and washed by the waters of an ever-flowing river.

But, in other respects, she was sleek and comely. The sunken cheek, the lack-lustre eye, the attenuated form, which betoken extreme destitution, were not visible in the person of this woman. She was stout, vigorous, and well-conditioned; she would have done well for a servant of all work;

but such a calling is less lucrative than the trade which she was then plying.

She held a baby in her arms; and the child at least told a tale of starvation. The poor little infant was meagre and ghastly; its flaccid skin hung loosely upon its bones; it was an object indeed of pity, but it belonged not to the woman who held it, or, if it did, that woman was a monster.

The mendicant continued to petition us. Nothing can be conceived more lugubrious than were the tones of her querulous voice. Everard's heart was touched; he looked at the child, and said something.

"There are six of them," replied the woman, "all fatherless, and no bread to eat."

The child set up a loud scream, for the woman was pinching it unmercifully!

"Six young children and no father!" said my companion in a sorrowful voice. "Good God! how much and how great wretchedness there is in this unhappy world!" and, as he said this, he took from his purse a coin which glittered like unto gold.

I saw the woman's face brighten, but she continued with her lamentable story. Husband dead of typhus fever,—an old bed-ridden mother, and half-a-dozen children to support,—one a cripple,

one an idiot, three ill with the measles, and the sixth then in her arms: all these things found their way immediately to the kind heart of my friend.

“Take this, my poor woman,” said he; “it grieves me much that I have no time to visit the wretched haunts of which you speak.” Then, turning to me, he continued, “It is an evil thing indeed, Jerningham, to hear of such abject wretchedness as is the lot of this afflicted woman. We talk of our enlightened laws,—our perfect constitution,—the wisdom of our establishments,—the welfare of our people, and yet poverty and starvation meet us at every turn. Hunger and wretchedness are abroad amongst the people; and the rich heed them not; they turn away from that which is displeasing to them, and thank God they are not as these men are,—mendicants in the streets of a metropolis.”

I smiled. “And what did you give the woman?”

“I wish that I could have given her more, but I had not much, Claude, to give. I gave her half-a-sovereign, which is but a mite for six children and a bed-ridden mother.”

“Half-a-sovereign! And you thought that you did right in administering to the wants of this woman?”

“Could I doubt for one moment, my dear

Claude? The woman lacks the money far more than I do. I at all events have bread to eat."

"And so has that woman bread in abundance. Did you mark how lusty she was? Those rotund cheeks and bright eyes spoke not of starvation."

"I did not observe her," replied Everard. "I listened to her agonized voice, but my eyes were rivetted upon the infant. Poor little helpless mortal! It has known no sin, and yet it has known suffering. But do you think that the woman is an impostor? Good God! are there such people as to assume the garb of poverty, that they may wring tribute from the compassionate? Is human nature indeed so depraved?" and Everard Sinclair sighed.

"You do not know, then, that there are few trades so profitable as mendicity in London?"

"I have dwelt little in cities," replied Everard.

"That child, I have no doubt, was a borrowed one. You did not see the woman slide her fleshy hand beneath the tattered frock of the infant, and pinch the little victim with all her might, till it awakened your compassion with a scream!"

"No, no, Claude; I believe now that you are only endeavouring to play upon the credulity of your rustic friend; and yet,"—altering the tones of his voice,—“and yet, there must have been

something of this or you would have relieved the woman yourself."

We passed on: this little incident had made my companion quite sad; for nothing distressed him more than to reflect upon the unrighteousness of humanity. It afflicted him to think of his neighbour's sufferings, but to think of his neighbour's sins was a source of still greater inquietude, and for this reason, it always made him sad to traverse the streets of a metropolis.

As we proceeded onward another mendicant accosted us, and this pauper also was a woman. Again Everard stood still to commune with the applicant, and again I scrutinized with a keen eye the form and features of the beggar-woman. I ought to have been a Bow-street officer by profession; for I possess, in a remarkable degree, the faculty of identifying an individual, whose person I have once seen; let him disguise himself in what manner he will, my senses are not to be deluded.

I looked at this new applicant. It was evening, and though it was not yet dark, the lamps had already been illumined. The woman, with all the cunning of her profession, stood in the shadow of a house; but I marked her. She told a heart-rending story of most lamentable distress.

Everard slid his hand into his pocket; but I restrained him, and at the same time, I cried aloud

in a stern voice, "Go, woman, go; this is too much. I wonder that the lie does not choke you.—Away, or I will send those after you whom you would not very willingly encounter."

"Nay, Claude," said Everard Sinclair, "it may be that the woman is in distress. Surely, all the mendicants in London are not, though some may be, impostors. Why are you so harsh to this woman?"—and he would have stayed, but I dragged him along with me.

Everard turned round his head, and the woman was already out of sight.

"I will tell you," said I, "the reason of my harshness. You have once been imposed upon to-day; I would not that you should be imposed upon a second time."

"Are you sure that I have been imposed upon, Claude?"

"Quite; and I had no desire that the same woman should cheat you twice."

"*The same woman!*"

"Yes, Everard; the woman whom I rebuked so harshly just now, is no other than the widowed parent of six children, to whom you gave half-a-sovereign in * * *-street."

"How know you, Claude?—Why, the thing is impossible; we quitted her scarce a quarter of an hour ago, and she then had on other

garments; and what could she have done with her child?"

"I am not quite prepared," said I, laughing, "to answer this latter question; but that the woman has dogged us it is evident, thinking that young gentlemen, who give half-sovereigns to beggars, are not to be met with every day."

"But how did you recognize her?"

"I observed, when I first saw her, that one of her front teeth was broken in a peculiar manner, so as to give it a triangular appearance, which struck my attention very forcibly. This woman is well skilled in her profession. Since her first visit she has changed her attire, including her *wig*, my dear Everard, and done sundry other things to disguise herself. She intercepted us at the corner of this street; for we have been going in a circuitous direction, whilst she has proceeded by the straightest road. She dwells somewhere about this place, I imagine; this quarter of the town is her *beat*."

"'Tis a sad thing," replied Everard, mournfully, "that when one most tries to be charitable, one often is the most mischievous. But I have learned something: benevolence without wisdom is like fire without a hearth,—it burns the dwelling it is intended to warm. We have no greater enemy than ignorance: henceforth, it shall be my study to know."

“I have studied Political Economy under Malthus,” said I; “you are the pupil of his antagonist, Godwin. We young gentlemen from Haileybury are prodigious adepts in Political Economy.”

“I do not doubt it,” replied Everard, laughing; “but do not, I beseech you, lay my errors of ignorance to the account of my being a proselyte of Godwin’s. I have erred against Godwin, not with him. That philosopher will not admit the existence of virtue where there is no wisdom. “A virtuous action,” saith he, “is that of which both the motive and the tendency concur to excite our approbation.” You should read that chapter, in the *Political Justice*, on the connection between understanding and virtue.”

“Ah! Everard,” said I, “you have lived too much in the country,—you have lived too much among your books. There is much wisdom to be learned in the heart of a great city.”

And thus we went on, conversing upon one subject and another, until night had spread itself over the metropolis, and the luminous gas in every direction was doing duty as vicar-general of the sun. The clock struck seven, and it struck us that we had neither of us *dined*.

Now dinner is a thing not to be dispensed with under any combination of circumstances. “A

man seldom," saith Dr. Johnson, "thinks of anything with more earnestness than his dinner.—"The dinner bell," quoth Lord Byron,—"the dinner bell is the tocsin of the soul."—"Eating," saith another great philosopher, "is the serious occupation of life." For my part, I never was capable of any great undertaking until I had dined.

We were then, I rather think, in the Haymarket, so we determined to dine at a certain *restaurateur's*, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Opera House. I am sorry that I cannot, at this distance of time, give the reader a very accurate account of the various esculents served up to us.

At the next table to ourselves, though divided from us by a partition and a curtain, sate two gentlemen, whose conversation seemed to run almost exclusively upon money matters. You would have taken them for two bankers' clerks, they talked so much about bills and hundreds.

When I am waiting for dinner at a coffee-house, I seldom like to talk much myself. I therefore took up a newspaper, and resting my head against the partition of the box, I now read a paragraph, and now listened to my next-door neighbours.

"Then you are quite sure,"—said one of the speakers,—"you are quite sure that this will pay all. You have left nothing unmentioned, I hope; for I have given you *carte blanche*; and it is a plea-

sure to me, I assure you, a very great pleasure to be able to do this for you, my dear boy."

"How much do they all come to?" asked the second speaker; "just allow me to run my eye over the list. Eight hundred and fifty pounds, by Jove! you are a liberal fellow! What a d——d extravagant animal I have been! and all this in little more than a year! But,"—and here his voice assumed a less joyous tone,—“I would much rather, much rather, indeed, that the governor paid these cursed bills for me.”

“And I would much rather,” resumed the first speaker, “that the governor, as you call him, should know nothing of his son’s thoughtlessness and extravagance. Let him be spared this. I have not come forward to save your father’s money, but his feelings; it would be a severe blow to him to know this. Remember, that it is my choice, my desire, my earnest desire, to do this. *I* am the obliged party. You are by no means my debtor.”

“Oh! yes, I am,—I am indeed. You have always been my best friend.”

“Nonsense!” And then I heard something like a long-drawn sigh.

Then there was a pause, which lasted not very long. He, whose words I have recorded first in this dialogue, broke through the silence. “Then you start on Monday?” he said.

“I do ; we go by the steamer to Ostend. Then to Bruges, Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels : after this we shall proceed to Paris. How I long to visit that emporium of frolic ! By Jove ! the very thought of it gladdens me.”

“And what think you of the mentor who is to accompany you ?”

“He is more knave than fool,” replied the other ; “he has a keen eye to the future ; and thinks more of gaining the friendship of the son, than the good opinion of the father.”

I had heard quite enough of this dialogue to convince me that I was acquainted with the speakers. “Everard,” I said, in a suppressed voice, “there are some friends of ours in the next box.”

“Some friends of ours ! and who may they be ?”

“Rise up, Everard, and judge for yourself.” And we emerged from the compartment we had occupied, and turned towards the neighbouring box.

It was actually Harry Leicester who sate there ; and his companion, I scarcely need add, was no other than Mr. Delaval.

Upon first seeing us, Leicester began to blush, and Delaval’s countenance to work ; but they soon reassumed their serenity, and we began to converse upon various topics.

“We must take a stroll together, when you have

dined," said Leicester. "What say you to an expedition to the theatre, thence to Offley's (for it's singing night), and thence to the Finish, my brave boys? One does not have such a meeting as this often."—Here Delaval began to frown and to bite his nether lip vehemently.

"Well," said I, "you may consider me, for one, enlisted beneath your banners; and Everard,"—here I turned towards my friend, "you will accompany us of course, for it is expedient that every philosopher should be acquainted with vice before he condemns it."

Everard smiled, and made answer, "I don't much care about accompanying you, provided that you do not request me to banish Minerva from my temple and to set up Bacchus there instead."

"For 'temple,' read 'temples,'" cried Leicester. "Then it is agreed that we do not part company to-night."

Here Delaval interposed, and, fixing his large searching eyes upon his young friend, as though he would read the innermost thoughts of the boy, he said, "It grieves me that I should once again be forced to re-assume the office, now some time abandoned, of the school-master. Ere now, I have been called upon in that capacity, to mar your enjoyments, though they have been more harmless than those which you now propose to

yourselves. I have no authority over you, now, Leicester; we are equals, man to man—restrained only by the laws of society: I appeal to those laws. Will you leave me here, to finish the evening in solitude?"

"I will *not*," replied Leicester. "Excuse me, Mr. Delaval; I was hurried along by the impulse of the moment." Then, turning towards Everard and myself, he continued, laughing as he spoke,—
"You see that I am a close prisoner this evening; you must absolve me of my engagement; I forgot, when I made it, that I was bound to my friend, Delaval, whose pupil I am happy to account myself still, albeit no longer a school-boy."

"Gentlemen, your dinner is on table," said the waiter; so Everard and I sat down.

"Strange," thought I, "that this man should be so punctilious, whom I have seen, ere now, at the Cider Cellars. What a mystery this Delaval is!"

Everard drank no wine, so that our meal was speedily despatched. When we rose up to depart, we found that Leicester and Delaval were gone.

"Where do you sleep to-night, Everard?" said I.

"At an hotel; I forget the name of it. I have sent my luggage thither already; it is the house from which the coach starts. You know it; we breakfasted there once."

I acquainted him with the name of the house ; and arm-in-arm we quitted the coffee-room.

As we passed along the Strand, we were accosted by a couple of those unfortunate victims of man's depravity, who frequent the streets in such numbers after night-fall. The women were by no means unseemly, and I stopped to parley with them for a few minutes.

One of the Cyprians, who stood opposite to Everard, laid both her hands upon the shoulders of my friend, and riveted her eyes upon his face,—“ I will not ask *you* to come with me,” she said, and there was great sweetness in the tones of her voice ; “ I will not ask *you* to come with me ; but I will give you a little advice : keep away, keep away from such as I am ! The wicked seduced us, and the wicked would we seduce—but you are good, sir, and beautiful too ! so God bless you, God bless you, young gentleman !” And no longer able to restrain herself, she pressed her burning lips to the fair cheek of my friend. Then, turning to her companion, she continued, “ Sophy, come away ! I would not for the whole world lead astray the goodness which I read in this young gentleman's face.”

The other Cyprian turned away—she was affected by the good feelings of her friend. As they walked off, I heard one of them say—“ I have seen

the taller of those gentlemen in company with young Mr. Leicester."

"That girl, Everard," said I, "is not altogether lost; she has good feelings yet within her; it would be something to save such a woman;"—and I sighed, for this little incident had affected me.

"Did you not think that she was intoxicated?" asked Everard.

"Certainly not," I returned; "your modesty renders you uncharitable."

"These things make me very sad," resumed Everard; "it would kill me, I think, to live in London."

Most people, and I amongst them, would have been highly pleased by the compliments of the courtesan; but Everard, beautiful as he was, scarcely seemed to know that he was thus gifted: his was, indeed, a face which it might almost reclaim the vicious to look upon; it was so mild, so gentle, so benevolent; in feature and complexion it was almost perfect; but the mind shone upon it,—never was there such a countenance which belonged not to a truly good man.

CHAPTER XI.

Men that are safe and sure in all they do,
Care not what trials they are put unto ;
They meet the fire, the test, as martyrs would,
And though opinion stamp them not, are gold.

BEN JONSON.

I KNOW not that a narrative of my voyage to India would in any way amuse the reader. Dr. Johnson has given it as his opinion, that a ship is a worse place than a prison, because it is a prison with the chance of being drowned. Dr. Johnson was not far from being right, albeit he spake not from experience.

Imagine, then, gentlest of readers, that I am fairly landed at "the City of Palaces," that I am living in "Writer's Buildings," and spending the same sort of life as most young civilians are wont to spend, which, lest thou shouldest not be ac-

quainted with it, I will endeavour concisely to describe.

I bought horses and buggies; kept dogs and a *moonshee*;* gave champagne tiffins; sat with my legs on the table; smoked cheroots after breakfast, and my hookah every day after dinner; drove for half an hour, at sun-set, on the course, or grand *mall* of Calcutta; then had my groom in attendance with a saddle-horse, for me to ride up and down, joking with the gentlemen, flirting with the ladies, and displaying my agility upon horseback. I prided myself upon my stud, for I was a tolerably good judge of an animal, and hunted in the cold season, twice a-week, with the Calcutta hounds, which generally threw off at *Dum-Dum*, the head-quarters of the artillery, where I was sure of a good breakfast, in the house of some half-batta sub, who could ill afford to pay for the same. I had the advantage, for a few months, of an exceedingly well furnished purse, and was cursed with unlimited credit from shop-keepers, native and European; for I was known to be the son of my father, who, by the way, was at Delhi when I arrived, and *he* was known to be amongst the wealthiest in India. I had "stout notions" on the spending score, and scattered the yellow dust with

* A native instructor in the Oriental languages.

a profuseness which astonished the vulgar. I attended all the outcries (or auctions), and purchased a thousand things for which I had not the least occasion, merely for the sake of buying, and because I was wretched if I passed a day without diminishing the amount of my cash. On the whole, I played the fool with a success altogether unprecedented. I never thought of my health till I had lost it, nor of my money till it was all gone.

Calcutta is a very fine place for people with plenty of rupees—a very indifferent place for people with none; in this respect it differs not much from any other spot in the world, excepting that the facility of spending is greater in that “City of Palaces,” than in any other locality I have resided in. This extraordinary “facility of spending” is aided by the high price of articles; and young civilians, who have generally “more money than wits,” in their possession, or in more elegant language, whose intellectual treasury is more scantily furnished than their pecuniary one, are not certainly taxed more lightly than other people, by the dealers of Calcutta. However, (as a certain grave philosopher has remarked), “We must all pay for experience,” and, assuredly, I found, in my own case, that an outrageously heavy duty was fixed, by the moral legislature, upon this

useful commodity, and I had not sufficient sagacity or prudence to cheat the excise, so I paid for my experience with my money—I paid for my experience with my health.

Somehow or other I contrived, before I had been very long in India, almost to forget the friends whom I had left behind me, and to whom I had sworn an eternity of friendship. My uncle—Sinclair—and Leicester—they gradually slipped away from the closets of my memory, and I almost forgot that such people existed. In the constant excitement of life in which I was now living, I began to think solely of the present; I found that the only seasons at which my memory reminded me of my neglect was, when I was slightly elevated with the juice of the generous wine, and then I began to think of my friends, and to compose letters to them in imagination, which I vowed to put into words next morning, but which the morrow's sun never saw executed; the resolutions which I made overnight were forgotten when I rose from my bed; I ate my fish and rice for breakfast, and put my philosophy in my pocket.

I had sojourned about a year in Calcutta, during which time I had despatched but two letters to uncle Matthew, and one solitary epistle to my friend, Everard Sinclair, when a European ship brought me a long letter from the latter, which in

a great measure aroused my affections from the torpor into which they had fallen. The contents of that letter made a deep impression upon my mind, which his whole subsequent correspondence only tended to make more profound. I have still that correspondence in my possession, and it is my intention to lay it before the reader.

LETTER FROM EVERARD SINCLAIR TO CLAUDE
JERNINGHAM.

WHEN you think, my dear Claude, on the many promises I made to you, about upholding a constant correspondence, you will wonder, and not without reason, that I have not once written to you before this. But, in truth, since your departure from England, the tranquillity of my mind has been disturbed by a series of such conflicting misfortunes, that I can scarcely remember the day when, with any degree of composure, I could have given you an account of myself and of my affairs, which would not have been more distressing than satisfactory for you to peruse. And yet, after all, my dear friend, I know not that I ought to speak of misfortunes ; or rather, perhaps, when I make use of the word, I ought to apprise you, that I only mean thereby those reverses, which the imperial

Philosopher* has declared, “cannot reach the mind,”—those external circumstances which affect not the condition of a well-regulated moral state : for we can scarcely call those accidents “calamities,” which have not betrayed us into errors, making us think meanly of ourselves. All real evil is the occasion of bitter self-contempt ; we ought not to consider ourselves afflicted, when we can retain a consciousness of our integrity. The greatest calamity I have endured is the sense of having yielded to calamity,—the knowledge of having lost my tranquillity.

But I will abandon these metaphysical subtleties, and enter at once into a narration,—albeit, to the last degree egotistical,—of events which have occurred to me since we parted. When you quitted England, as you well know, I was still nothing better than a school-boy. I was not happy then,—but I will not dwell upon these things,—an accident, of a melancholy nature, soon relieved me from this thralldom.

My father died suddenly,—an apoplectic seizure terminated his existence. Let me hurry over the various circumstances attending upon this mournful event. My father’s will was read in my presence ; his whole property, money and lands, (for I

* Marcus Antoninus.

am ill at legal terms, my dear friend), was bequeathed to my brother Charles, with liberty of immediate possession,—saving a legacy of two hundred pounds for myself, to buy me, as the words of the testament ran, “a suit of mourning and a copy of Tom Paine!” It would ill become me to comment upon these things. I quitted my brother’s roof, for he had never loved me, and turned my steps towards the metropolis, exclaiming, in the fine language of the soldier-poet, Sydney, “*Aul viam inveniam aut faciam.*”

In the strictest sense of the word, I was now independent. I was a being alone in the world,—a free agent, uncontrolled by any caprices but my own,—drawing the means of subsistence from no foreign resources,—resting upon the staff of my own exertions,—no one to assist me upon my journey, yet no one to impede my progress. And, situated as I was, I regarded my future prospects with an inconceivable degree of complacency. I said to myself, “There are no blessings in the world equal to the blessings of independence; and I am an independent man.” I then began to calculate my resources. I remembered a particular dogma in the writings of an eminent living philosopher, which had forcibly struck me when I read it, and which I now reflected upon with considerable satisfaction. “There is no real wealth,” says Mr.

Godwin, "excepting the labour of man." In proportion, therefore, as I was capable of labour did I look upon myself as wealthy or indigent. My physical powers were nothing very remarkable; my frame was of rather a delicate construction, and the muscles of my body inclined not to strength: but disease had not weakened my corporeal energies, nor debauchery impaired my constitution; so that I was capable of considerable exertion, and could bear with facility very great fatigue. I had always, as you know, lived so temperately, and had been so accustomed to exercise self-denial, that I had brought my actual wants into comparatively a small compass. On the whole, therefore, I was not entirely destitute of corporeal advantages; but I did not set much stress upon them, as the means whereby I looked to support myself: but turned, with increased satisfaction, to the contemplation of my intellectual resources. You remember that, from the first dawn of our acquaintance, I delighted in the creation of poetry; some of my trifles you were sufficiently well pleased with to transcribe,—of all you expressed your approbation. I am aware that they were sufficiently immature and incorrect both in thought and diction; but there was a certain liveliness of fancy pervading them all, which prevented them from being utterly worthless. I looked upon poetry as

my strong-hold,—a certain class of metaphysical poetry, combining the intricate deductions of philosophy with the imaginative flights of the poetical temperament. I had often heard that large sums of money had been given for poetical pieces,—the productions of various authors, who, *meo judicio* at least, manifested no very extraordinary genius. I conceived myself capable of creating poems equally excellent with these: and therefore, in my simplicity, I doubted not but that the booksellers would come forward to support me. So, with about a hundred-and-fifty pounds in my pocket, a small library of books, and a large bundle of manuscripts, I set out for London by myself, with a determination to be dependent upon no man.

I took up my residence in lodgings, situated in the neighbourhood of the Strand, and collected the little property I possessed. I felt a degree of independence in my new situation, which, to me, was peculiarly exhilarating. My means were limited enough, but then they were exclusively my own: no one had the smallest right in the world to interfere with the disposal of my little. I had very few fears for the future; I deemed that my intellectual resources would provide me with the necessaries of life: as I drank no wine and ate but little flesh, my personal expenditure was incon-

siderable; I consumed but a small sum upon the satisfying of my sensual cravings.

Here then, undisturbed for a while, I prosecuted my studies with serenity. I reperused the manuscripts I had brought with me; I selected the wheat from the tares, and exercised the most rigid criticism upon the works of my earlier boyhood. Then I composed a number of other poems, and added them to the original collection. And when I thought that I had enough to form a volume, I transcribed them all into a book legibly, upon one side of the paper.

I then bethought myself of publishing my compositions, expecting, in the fulness of my inexperience, to be amply rewarded for my literary labours; and, for this purpose, I applied to Mr. —, knowing him to be the Prince of Publishers, and little doubting the success of my application. But I failed. Mr. —, who has a heart laden with benevolence, received me with the urbanity of a gentleman, and the kindness of one who loveth his neighbour; yet he would not treat with me for the purchase of my manuscripts. He read several pages of my written volume,—sighed, and then laid down the book. I looked into his face, expecting an answer; it was sorrowful;—he presently spoke. He advised me not to publish my poems. They were excellent, he

said, of their kind ; at least, as far as he was able to judge, from the few passages he had perused ; but he saw at once that they were pervaded by a philosophy hostile to public opinion. It would injure him to publish my work ; but it would injure me, he continued, much more. He tried to dissuade me from thus publicly avowing the heterodox notions I had taken up,—he tendered me a world of good advice ; but I would not listen to him, for I was bent upon publishing,—hoping to acquire fame, to amass money, and to do good to my fellow-creatures.

So I looked about me for another publisher ; and after a period I fixed upon one, whose business it was to give circulation to works of an unorthodox nature. He assured me that they had a very large sale. Liberty was gaining ground in the world ; but poetry, he said, was not the thing :—however, he was willing to print for me ; but I must publish at my own risk ;—he would lend me his name and colophon.

At first, I did not exactly understand what was meant by publishing at my own risk : afterwards, I learnt by experience that it was this,—to pay all the losses, if there were any, and to let the profits go into the hands of the bookseller. However, I acceded to his terms.

And here, my dear Claude, I must pause to

observe that, whereas the first person I had solicited to publish for me was a gentlemanly, benevolent, and very venerable-looking man; my new friend, so far from being this, was the most disgusting individual I had ever met with. He was a complete and avowed atheist; he acknowledged no laws, civil or religious; he had cast off his morality with his faith, and, in short, was no better than a beast. His countenance was bloated and sensual; his eyes were inflamed and leering; his dress was slovenly and dirty; he was stupified with brandy; he smelt strongly of tobacco; his language was coarse and brutal; his familiarity was thoroughly revolting; he was the filthiest creature I had ever seen:—his house was unwholesome and disorderly; he took me into a back parlour, and introduced me to some of his friends; he assured me that they were the greatest intellects of the age; profound philosophers and moralists; the benefactors of the human race: they looked, for all the world, like pickpockets; I thought that I was in a den of thieves. At the house of Mr. —, the bookseller, I had seen several literary characters, and I was so prepossessed by the lofty, yet mild, intellectual expressions of their faces, that I longed to become acquainted with them all. But here I was sickened beyond measure; I looked around me, and felt anxious to

escape. It was scarcely the hour of noon, and yet bottles and tumblers were on the table. There were several broken glasses on the floor, the remains of the last night's debauch: the room had evidently not been swept out, nor the windows opened; so that the atmosphere of the apartment was most offensive. I was introduced to the author of ———, with an assurance that he was "the first man of the day." If ever Satan had set his seal upon the human countenance, it was visible upon the face of that man. He looked as if he was capable of perpetrating the most atrocious actions ever suggested by the arch-fiend. I shuddered involuntarily, as he addressed me with a familiar and indelicate expression, clapping me at the same time on the shoulder, and bidding me be of good cheer. He said that he would take me in hand,—that he would foster my aspiring genius; for that I exhibited very promising symptoms. Then he asked me to take a glass of brandy, to drink confusion to religion; and he proposed a most blasphemous toast.

My God! how disgusted I was; I felt an indescribable sensation of loathing; my soul sickened within me; I could scarcely preserve my tranquillity; I felt as if I should have fallen down: I faltered out a broken excuse, and walked, or rather tottered, out of the room. The bookseller followed

me into the shop : he had just enough reason about him to remember his own interest ; he saw that I was offended, and he wished to conciliate me.— Mr. —, he said, was a little in his cups ; he was rather too startling upon a novice. I should come by degrees, he informed me, to the acmé of free-thinking myself : at present I was too scrupulous. He invited me to supper that night,—an invitation which I indignantly declined. He had something of importance to propose to me. Would I translate the “ *Système de la Nature* ? ” He would reward me most handsomely for my trouble. It would pass, he said, several editions.

I had read this obnoxious publication, but I could not subscribe to its desolating doctrines. I would not consent to be an instrument to propagate M. D’Holbach’s impieties. I walked out of the shop, never to return to it again.

My book was printed and published. I took but little interest in it myself. I did not even take the trouble to superintend its progress through the press, and when it appeared, I was heartily ashamed to see my own name upon the title-page, coupled with that of the atheist publisher. But this was little,—every respectable Review made a point of abusing my work. It was done “ more in sorrow than in anger.” Not one of the Reviewers denied that there was considerable merit in

my poetry; but they accused me of "a new fangled philosophy,"—of attempting to undermine established customs,—of wishing to propagate an undue excess of civil and religious liberty. They said that my poems were of an inflammatory nature; nay, many accused me of actual infidelity. One Review,—the most powerful organ of them all,—exhorted me in terms of most well-intentioned benevolence, to pause and consider what I was about,—a young man of considerable ability, single-handed and alone, had set about the regeneration of man, with every possible integrity of purpose,—it was necessary that I should embark in the cause, girt about with the armour of fortitude. My sufferings, the Reviewer said, would be endless. I was making war against the world single-handed. It was not possible that I should accomplish my purpose, but it was certain that I should ruin myself by the attempt. The writer of this article had the discernment not to class my opinions with those of a Paine or a Spinoza; he recognized in my writings a fervent degree of piety and religion. I was no atheist, he said; I was something very far from it; but he was afraid that I was in the hands of the atheists. He cautioned me to beware of such men; they were designing, unprincipled blasphemers, the set of men amongst whom I had fallen; they would lead me into the gulf of per-

dition; and make me an instrument to work out their evil purposes,—I assented to the truth of all this. Claude, an idea has possessed me,—it is a strange one, but I cannot get rid of it,—that the writer of this article was *your uncle*. It was so much in his style: so imbued with his benevolent spirit; partaking so much of his kindness of manner, and his earnest wishes for the good of a fellow-creature; that I can scarcely believe that he was *not* the writer of this well-intentioned review. Besides, as I subsequently learned, he had been endeavouring to discover my place of residence, the knowledge of which he never attained; neither, in my present circumstances, was I anxious that he should.

Another magazine commenced, by remarking, that, “no man with any regard to his character, would publish with the firm I had employed.” Alas! I had certainly committed a most grievous and incurable error. I could not but acknowledge this myself, more especially as I subsequently received from Mr. —, an account of the losses he had sustained by my work, though I had every reason to suppose that he had derived profit from the speculation. I had sent it into the world bearing my own name, and many of my old school-fellows had purchased copies of the book. I know, besides, that a very considerable circula-

tion had been ensured in the manufacturing districts ; and if any thing else had been wanting to make certain my suspicions of fraud, I was informed that my old master, Dr. R——, with a true regard to my personal interest, had bought up all the unsold copies, for the purpose of committing them to the flames. Indeed, upon applying at a bookseller's myself, I was assured that the work was "out of print ;" therefore, how my publisher contrived to lose money I never had the penetration to discover. However, ill as I could afford it, I sent him the sum demanded, rather than have any altercation with a man so little virtuous as this infidel bookseller.

And such, my dear Claude, is the history of my first entrance into the world of letters,—such, an account of the first attempt which I made towards reforming the world. I have already written so much, that I know not whether I shall proceed in my narrative just at present, or whether it would not be better to break off till some future opportunity shall present itself. When I first commenced this letter, I purposed only to give you the outlines of my history, imagining that in a few pages I could tell you all that had happened since we parted. But I cannot write to you as I would to other people ; I cannot control my communicativeness when conscious I am addressing my old friend. To you I

write all that I think ; to others I think what to write. If my tediousness is wearisome to you, I beg that you will tell me when you reply. I shall bring this long letter to a conclusion, with a promise that my next shall be more interesting.—God bless you, my dear Claude ; and forget not your old friend.

CHAPTER XII.

———Lady, be not moved ;
I will stand champion for your honour, hazard
All that is dearest to me.—

SHIRLEY.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

My dearest friend,
I AGAIN take up the pen to address you, to resume the narrative of my adventures, which I commenced in my last letter ; you will pardon my egotism, I know : I am constrained to write of myself,—to pour out my heart fully upon this paper ; for I am vain enough to think that you desire me so to do.

I told you in my last, that upon removing to London, I took up my residence in the vicinity of the Strand. My landlady's name was Oliver ;

she was an honest, warm-hearted widow woman, who did her duty by her God and by her neighbour,—both in theory and in practice a Christian.

There were other lodgers in the same house with me,—an aged gentleman with a virgin daughter. Their name was Travers; they had been dwelling with Mrs. Oliver many months ere I became an inmate of her house. They were poor, but they had once been rich; at least, this much Mrs. Oliver surmised, declaring that they were meet company for the greatest gentry in England; nay, for the Princes of the Blood Royal themselves.

I was desirous of becoming acquainted with my fellow-lodgers; but Mrs. Oliver informed me that they had expressed their intention of abstaining from all society while residing beneath her roof. “They are poor, sir,” said Mrs. Oliver, “and maybe they do not much like to be seen in their poverty by other folks. Besides, Mr. Travers is sick.”

“Are they then so *very* poor?” said I; for I thought that it might be in my power to assist them.

“They are very poor, for *such* people,” returned my landlady; “if all of us had our deserts Mr. Travers would not be living here. They be very good people, indeed, sir,—so pious-like, and so mild in their manners,—and Miss Lucy, who is as beautiful as an angel, reads the Bible to the old

gentleman : and one day, when I went in, they bade me stay, and I heard a chapter out of the Testament, and some beautiful things out of a book written by a man named Taylor,—a book called the *Holy Living*. It does one good to hear her read,—she reads like an angel, which she is,”—and the tears stood in Mrs. Oliver’s eyes.

I asked whether Mr. Travers had any ostensible reliance to which he trusted for his daily bread.

Mrs. Oliver scarcely knew ; her rents were regularly paid, and generally in small change ; she suspected, however, that the industry of Miss Travers supported them both. “The industry of Miss Travers !” I exclaimed.—“Why, yes, sir,” returned my landlady,—“it may be, after all, that I am wrong ; but often, when I go into the room, I see Miss Lucy hard at work, sometimes painting card-racks or fire-screens,—sometimes working foot-stools or bible-covers in different-coloured worsted or silks,—and when they are once worked, sir, I never see them again ; but she goes out sometimes of an evening with a little French basket upon her arm, and calls at the corner of the street for Mrs. Bainbridge’s little girl, to protect her, as Miss Lucy says,—though, Lord love you ! what protector can a child be ?—and then they two, as little Emma tells me, go up to the neighbourhood of Soho : I do believe, sir, that Miss

Travers sells her work to the people of the Bazaar."

That evening (it was about the latter end of June), I awaited with a strong feeling of anxiety the hour of Miss Travers' departure, to dispose, as I little doubted, of her wares; and as twilight began to steal over the city, I heard her gentle foot-falls down the stairs; so emerging from my chamber, I proceeded to follow her the whole length of her journey. I was desirous of learning whither she went, and of inquiring from the people with whom she communicated, the true state of her pecuniary circumstances. Do you think that the benevolence of my intentions justified the meanness of my *espionage*?

She walked nearly the whole length of the street; then paused opposite to a certain door; having rapped at which, she stood upon the steps, awaiting the appearance of the servant. Presently a maid obeyed the summons, who, without waiting to be asked any questions, in a respectful tone, informed Miss Travers, that her mistress had taken out Miss Emma, she believed, to the gardens at Vauxhall.

Lucy Travers appeared much disconcerted when this intelligence first smote upon her ears; she lingered some moments on the door-step, as though she were doubting whether to advance or to re-

turn ; but presently, as I passed by, I heard her say,—“ No ; I must go on,—come what may, my father’s medicine shall be bought,”—and then she proceeded on her solitary journey, fearful, yet contemning fear, when bent on so worthy an enterprise.

She had not advanced very far, when, following at a little distance, as I did, I observed a young man, of a very fashionable appearance, accost her with the most impertinent familiarity, and presently venture to encircle her waist. The poor girl trembled from head to foot ; she had not power to call for assistance, or to tear herself from the grasp of the stranger, who still continued with one arm around her waist, whilst throwing back her veil with the other, he thrust his head rudely beneath her bonnet, and said something which I did not hear ; for a faint voice, at that moment, articulated, “ Mercy ! mercy ! ”

You know that I am one who, all my life, have been averse from any violent extremities. I never have used the agency of force, when the same purpose could be effected by a peaceful appeal to the reason of my opponent ; but here it was absolutely necessary that I should exercise momentary decision. There was not an instant to be lost ; so I seized the intruder by the throat, and, with a firm gripe and a sudden vehemence of action, threw

him upon, or rather dashed him against, the pavement; and, his hat falling off as he fell, his head came in contact with the curb-stone, and he lay senseless and bleeding upon the ground.

I was not immediately acquainted with the full extent of the mischief I had done. I thought only of Lucy Travers, who was leaning against the wall of a house, every limb quivering with emotion. I supported her into a shop; and no sooner had she entered, than she sunk upon a chair and fainted,—her strength of mind could hold out no longer.

The people of the shop came to my assistance. They untied the strings of her bonnet, and removed all the covering from her head. And then for the first time I looked upon a face, which was indeed beautiful as an angel's.

When I saw that Miss Travers was in safety, I hastened to ascertain the extent of injury which the stranger had received at my hands. A crowd had by this time collected, and some policemen had joined the assembly. "Where is he?" "Who is he?" "Seize him!" were cries which greeted my ears as I advanced. There was a woman of the town in the crowd, who was loud in her vociferations for "Justice!" "Guard the door, Mr. Policeman! don't let the murderer escape!" and then she wrung her hands in an agony of grief.

"It is he,—my poor Lord! it is he! and they have murdered him; the blood-thirsty villains!"

I stood at the door, and cried out, "In God's name, my friends, bring the wounded man into the shop, whilst I run to secure medical assistance."

"Let him do no such thing," cried the female I had heard before.

"You are my prisoner!" said a policeman, tapping me on the shoulder as he spoke; "you must not stir out of my custody."

"That is right! that is right!" shrieked the woman; "I hope to see him swing, some day, at Newgate!"

By this time the wounded man,—his pockets having been previously rifled,—was brought into the shop, where I stood. He was stunned; and his whole countenance was besmeared with a profusion of blood: but I knew enough of surgery to be certain, upon inspection, that he was not dangerously injured. The shopkeeper brought me a sponge, and a basin of cold water. I brushed aside the hair from the forehead of my victim, and sprinkled the cool element upon his brow. Then I passed the sponge over his countenance, and wiped away the blood and dirt that begrimed it. Oh, Jerningham! guess my astonishment,—guess the horror that flashed across my soul, when I looked upon a well-known face, the face of one

whom I had loved in my boyhood! Claude! that wounded man, who was then lying senseless in my arms,—the blood streaming from a gash in his head, inflicted by my violence, was no other than our old school-fellow,—the gallant, and good-hearted—HARRY LEICESTER!

“Let us ascertain who the wounded gentleman is,” said the policeman, “that we may convey him in safety to his lodgings.” And he proceeded to search for a card-case, or some letters, to ascertain the place of the sufferer’s residence.

“Oh! I know who he is well enough,” cried the female who had spoken before, and who now entered the shop and stood amongst us, attired in all the finery of her profession, and displaying, as she threw back her veil, the beautiful face which had ruined her. “Oh! I know who he is well enough. It is Lord Leicester! it is Lord Leicester! and he lives in —— Square.”

And just as she said this, one of the policemen held up a letter to the gas-light, and declared that the woman had spoken the truth. This was the first intimation which had reached me that our friend, by the death of his father, had added a title to his name.

“Has any one gone for a surgeon?” I exclaimed to one of the myrmidons of office, who had stationed himself before the shop-door, and was looking on

with indescribable serenity. "I entreat you, let no time be lost, or the wounded man will bleed to death."

"It is no part of my business," replied the man unconcernedly, "to run after doctors just now; I have enough to do to look after you." And he smiled with a look of insolent sagacity.

"No part of your business! Good God! is it part of your business to stand by inactive whilst a fellow-creature is bleeding to death? You prevent me from seeking assistance, and refuse to go forth yourself. Assuredly one of you is enough to hinder such a prisoner as I am from escaping. I am not so desperate a criminal,—so formidable a ruffian that you need fear me. I intreat you to go in quest of a surgeon. You stand here as an administrator of justice; is it justice to commit homicide?—to look with a leering eye upon a brother mortal in the arms of death, whilst it is in your power to save him by an effort. You shall answer for this to your superior; I have marked you, and you shall not escape." But, seeing that my threats were of no avail, I drew out my purse, and tendered the whole of its contents to one of the shopmen, who immediately (for he had only been waiting for a bribe) set out in search of a physician.

By this time, Miss Travers and Lord Leicester

began, almost at the same moment, to recover their suspended faculties; and, with indescribable sensations of delight, I beheld them both open their eyes, and gaze with a wondering expression of countenance at the people assembled around them.

"You have nothing to fear, Miss Travers," said I, placing myself before Leicester, that she might not look upon the bleeding man; "you do not know me, but I am your fellow-lodger, and I will see that you are restored in safety to your father;" and then I cast my eyes around, to see if I could find any one to despatch for a coach; but they fell upon the stern policeman, and I remembered that I was not a free-agent; and then—but it was only for a moment—my heart sickened with a feeling of despondency.

"Well, sir,—supposing we go," said one of the 'jacks in office,' who had already inquired my name and address,—"*the young lady* seems coming to quick enough, and the doctor will soon be here for the gentleman,—and I have no time to lose humbugging. It's a pity, sir, it be so early in the evening, for you will have to bide till to-morrow in the station-house."

I had anticipated this intimation, and had already determined how to meet it. I took the policeman aside, and informed him of all that had taken place. I told him that Miss Travers resided

beneath the same roof with myself,—that she was a young lady eminently respectable, whom I had accidentally rescued from insult, though, unfortunately, in so doing, I had been betrayed into unintentional ferocity. I was willing to appear before the justice-seat ; I had no desire to escape ; I was ready to give an account of my conduct ; but I requested the indulgence of the officer, being anxious to escort Miss Travers home, and to restore her to the guardianship of her parent. In order, I said, that I might do this, without encroaching upon the duties of the policeman, I was willing that he should accompany us to — Street. If he would send one of his fellows for a coach, we might all three of us set out together.

To my great joy and astonishment, the officer believed all I said. This man, though somewhat brutalized by his profession, and necessitated to be wakeful and suspicious, was not altogether destitute of good feeling. He said, that he regretted exceedingly the unpleasant situation in which I was placed ; but he was constrained to confine me in the station-house, that I might be brought forward for examination on the morrow. However, he doubted not but that I should be speedily dismissed. I had nothing to fear from the rigour of the law. In the mean time he acceded to my pro-

posals ; and despatched his companion for a vehicle.

Having settled this, I directed my attention towards the unfortunate victim of my violence. He was recovering his self-possession rapidly, and had already declared himself not so much injured. I went up to him, and addressed him familiarly by name, — “Harry Leicester,” I said, “do you remember me ? You are not entirely amongst strangers.” He started at hearing himself accosted, and looking up, he recognized me immediately. “Everard Sinclair ; how strange ! my old school-fellow, how came you here ? I have now, at all events, one friend to assist me. You are always at hand, when I am in distress. This is not the first time you have exposed yourself in my behalf ;” — and he held out his hand in token of affection.

“No, — no, — Leicester,” I replied, emotion rendering me almost inarticulate. “It is I who have done this ; behold your enemy, not your friend, in me. Take this card ; I will tell you every thing to-morrow ; it is better that you should not excite yourself now.”

“Nay, do not desert me,” said Leicester. “I do not understand what you say ; you were always the friend of the distressed ; stay with me.” I could not answer. The ignorant kindness of him

whom I had injured smote more keenly than could the bitterest upbraidings.

I extricated my hand from the grasp of my friend, and turned myself towards the surgeon, who had just entered the shop. A few moments were sufficient to assure him, that there was no danger to be apprehended from the wound which he was called upon to examine ; but I was unable to learn the precise extent of the mischief I had caused ; for the policeman, having returned with a coach, declared that he had no time to lose, and desiring Miss Travers and myself to enter the vehicle, he prepared to accompany us to — Street ; and in a few minutes we were at Mrs. Oliver's door.

I have entered so much into detail, narrating this adventure, my dear Claude, that what follows, must be touched upon but lightly, or this letter will exceed all limits, and you will begin to think I shall never have done. The restoration of Miss Travers to her father,—the delight which I experienced, when she was safe,—the repeated thanks of the over-joyed parent,—the trembling gratitude of the daughter,—the hopes expressed of our permanent friendship,—I shall be contented with just alluding to these things. Neither shall I enter more fully into the history of how I passed the remainder of that eventful night in the station-

house,—how I was brought forward for examination, next morning,—how I managed to satisfy the magistrate, and how Lucy Travers appeared, but was not called upon, to give evidence. Let it suffice, that I was fully acquitted: the assaulted party appeared not against me; and I immediately regained my liberty, the temporary loss of which was more than requited by the gratitude of Mr. Travers and his daughter, and the consciousness of having preserved the latter from the insults which my interference restrained.

But I did not feel perfectly happy. I had caused the blood of a fellow-creature to flow; I had committed, however justifiable the occasion, an act of extraordinary violence upon an individual whom I regarded with affection, and who had always expressed himself towards me in kindest terms of admiration and love. What would be Leicester's feelings, upon discovering that his old friend and companion, had been his assailant, and not his protector? What would be his horror, when he ascertained that my violence had precipitated him upon the very margin of the waters of death? Such were the thoughts that stirred in my bosom, and ruffled the serenity of my feelings. But presently I recollected myself, and said,—“I will seek out him, whom I have injured, and ask his forgiveness for what I have

done. I will sit by his bed-side; and nurse him throughout his sickness; I will do all that lies in my power to alleviate the sufferings, which he endures,"—and, as I said this, I proceeded to go forth, and was soon upon my way to Lord Leicester's.

A servant in livery informed me that his lordship was dangerously ill,—that he had met with a severe accident, having been knocked down in the streets by a cabriolet, and a deep incision inflicted in his head, so that it was impossible that I should be admitted; for that his lordship had given particular orders that no one should have access to him whatever, with the exception of one gentleman, whom he named, and whom his lordship had sent for in the morning. Upon this, the porter was about to shut the door upon me; but I entreated him, at least, to take up my card; but this even the servant refused to do; for Lord Leicester had given especial directions that no cards were to be sent up to him: so I was constrained to depart in disappointment, and to cherish the unpleasant reflections, which continued to agitate my mind.

When I arrived at the door of my lodgings, I was surprised to see a stylish-looking cabriolet, with a foot-boy at the horse's head, drawn up in front of Mrs. Oliver's house; and my landlady,

who had been looking out for my return, opened the door for me herself, and in a fluttering manner informed me that a strange gentleman had called, who, in a blustering voice, had inquired for me, and, upon learning that I was not at home, had signified his intention of waiting till I should return, and had desired Mrs. Oliver to inform me as soon as I came in, that the Hon. Captain Somebody, of the Guards, had called upon particular business, and requested to see me immediately. The name was unknown to me, and I thought at first there was some mistake; but I had no sooner entered the room, than a tall, whisker-bedizened gentleman "believed that he was addressing Mr. Sinclair."—He came, he said, from Lord Leicester.

"I have just come from his house, sir, myself," said I; "but I was peremptorily refused admittance. If you have been fortunate enough to see Lord Leicester, oh! tell me, sir, how you left my poor friend."

The gentleman in whiskers (for, having forgotten the name of this worthy individual, I am compelled to particularize him thus) repeated the last word I had uttered with an ineffable look of contempt, as he surveyed my humble apartment.—
"I am come here as Lord Leicester's friend, and the bearer of this letter. You will be pleased, sir, to peruse its contents. Lord Leicester, though

suffering severely, will contrive, sir, I doubt not, to see *you*."

I involuntarily gave vent to a cordial expression of delight.—"He was ever an excellent creature; I thought that he would see me; I do not deserve this generosity."

The gentleman in whiskers stared. "I think, sir," he said, "you will discover your mistake, when you peruse the contents of that letter."

I broke the seal, and opened it, never doubting but that the letter contained expressions of forgiveness, and regret that he had been disappointed in seeing me. Guess, Jerningham, what was my astonishment, when I found myself reading a *challenge*.

"Well, sir; you will oblige me by an answer. You need not trouble yourself to write, unless you like it. I shall be happy to convey a verbal message."

"No, sir," I replied, with a degree of calmness which astonished the gentleman in the Guards; "no, sir; I prefer writing. This business is not to be settled by a few hasty words in the way of message. Perhaps you will amuse yourself with a book, whilst I am employed upon my answer; or, perhaps, sir, you would prefer calling again, because I have a good deal to say in my letter."

"Answers of this nature," said the Captain,

"are generally laconic and pithy:" and he twirled the before-mentioned whiskers, affecting an air of *sang-froid*.

"Answers of *what* nature?" I replied, "I imagine, sir, that you little divine the nature of the answer I am about to make;" and I proceeded intently to write.

"There can be but one answer for an honourable man to return;" and the officer pretended to read, for he was decidedly averse to discussion, when there was any chance of meeting apt replies.

"True: there can be but one answer; and that answer I am about to return."

I firmly declined the invitation to single combat, which Lord Leicester had so thoughtlessly tendered. I told his Lordship I was perfectly sure that, when he reflected maturely upon what he had done, his conduct would appear ridiculous, even in his own eyes. How vain it was to talk of personal insult, since I had assaulted him when ignorant of who he was; and was ready to express my heartfelt regret,—my sorrow, for the violence I had been betrayed into. I said, that if it were the duty of either to demand an apology for what had passed, it was assuredly my part to insist that Lord Leicester should apologize to Miss Travers, for that she had been the party insulted. I refused, therefore, to accept his challenge, at all events,

until he was thoroughly restored to health ; before which time I said that I would visit him in person, and enter into any explanation he should think fit. I was placing this despatch in an envelope, when I was startled by a thundering rap at the street door, and in a minute, to my utter astonishment,—his head bandaged up, and his face pale and ghastly as that of a recent corpse, yet withal wearing an expression of good humour and kindness, commingled with certain outward indications of pain, which he could not conceal,—like one risen from the dead, Lord Leicester burst into the room.

“ Everard, my old friend, forgive me, I am sure you will. That letter—I was light-headed when I wrote it—I must have been—to send a challenge to you, and under such circumstances as these, when I have been the offending party. Sinclair, I am a weak profligate fellow, and I must be very contemptible in your eyes.” The gentleman in whiskers looked thunder-struck—“ He is light-headed at all events, now. Leicester, do you know what you are about ?”

“ Do I know what I am about ? Yes ! I have recovered the use of my reason now—I am come to ask pardon from an honest fellow, and from a young lady whom I have wantonly insulted. I know very well what I am about ; I thank you, sir, for the trouble you have taken, and the in-

terest you have expressed in my welfare. I am sorry that I cannot oblige you by bringing this affair to a crisis ; it is a pity that you have had so much trouble for nothing, Captain ———, and that you have thrown away such excellent advice upon me. But I really cannot oblige you by fighting." And he gave the Captain a hint to depart by shaking him cordially by the hand, and wishing him " good afternoon."

When we were alone, Leicester, with true spirit, expressed his heartfelt regret at what had passed—" I am a wild, reckless fellow," he said, " acting always upon impulse, running into mischief blindfold, and altogether heedless of consequences ; though always doing wrong, Sinclair, I never intend to do wrong ; I would not willingly give pain to the meanest creature in the animal world, but I fear that I am often the cause of suffering, arising from my thoughtless behaviour. For the first time, in my life, I have been properly chastised for my profligacy ; I richly deserved what I have suffered, and so far from blaming you, Sinclair, I honour the disinterested manliness of your character even more than I have hitherto done. I am a sad dissolute dog, and as I have begun life I fear so shall I end it. But if you knew all, my friend, you would not judge too harshly of me ; I could tell you a tale, Everard, which would raise up a

sudden horror in your breast ; but the individual whom I should thereby expose, however much I have suffered by his machinations, I will spare, though he merits not my clemency. Yet I will not seek to exculpate myself. I am an unworthy depraved creature, and you must regard me as something very despicable." And in this manner he went on upbraiding himself and praising me, until I interrupted his discourse, saying, " You have nothing to ask at my hands, Leicester ; you have not offended against me ; the generous spirit you have evinced, has filled me with admiration, delight, and gratitude, which will never pass away." Then I told him, for he requested that I would do so, all the circumstances which had led to our collision, and all that had taken place since we parted in ——— street the night before. I showed him the letter which I had intended to have sent him, and I spoke of the recklessness he displayed in leaving the sick-room, and exposing himself to an aggravation of the mischief which quiet would speedily obviate, but which excitement would certainly increase. But Leicester immediately checked me—" Nay, talk not of that," he said, " the only place where quiet was to be found, I felt, was in your house. After I had sent that inconsiderate letter, the contents of which were suggested to me by another, I immediately was seized with remorse ; I

remembered our old companionship ; I thought of your extreme gentleness, which, I knew, shrunk from insult and violence, as the sensitive plant recoils from the touch. I thought of the days when, espousing my cause, you entailed upon yourself the odium of our school-fellows. Then I thought of my own unworthiness—how I had recklessly insulted an innocent girl, conceiving her to be a woman of the town ; and then I thought how inadequate was my punishment to the pain which I had inflicted upon her, and how merciful was your conduct compared with mine, which had nothing whatever to justify it, and my anger against you passed away, and I longed to recall the inconsiderate challenge ; but that was impossible ; so I started up, and immediately ordered my chariot, determined to atone for my misconduct, by asking forgiveness from you and Miss Travers. You, Sinclair, have freely forgiven me ; can I hope a like pardon from your friend ?”

“ I can answer for it, that you *are* forgiven by this time. Lucy Travers is the last person in the world to harbour a single feeling of resentment. But whether she will see you, Leicester, I think is doubtful ; or rather, I am very uncertain, whether her father will consent to your admission.”

“ It is certainly a delicate affair,” resumed Leicester, with a seriousness of countenance, which

indicated the unpleasant reflections distracting the serenity of his mind. "It is an awkward explanation which I must enter into. By telling the truth, I must make confession of an habitual disposition to profligacy. And it is not very pleasant for any man to expose his own dissolute courses in the presence of a beautiful girl. But I must not be restrained from what is right by any selfish feelings of delicacy. I will borrow one of your favourite expressions, 'What I ought to do, that I dare do,' Everard. At worst, I can only say this; that, walking alone to the theatre, I espied a peculiarly beautiful form moving before me in the streets,—that, unused to meet any females on the pavement, who belonged not to a particular class, I had taken those liberties with her person, which I should have refrained from had she been less beautiful, or had I entertained a suspicion of her innocence. This is the true story; and, however painful the exposure, it must be made. I shall always be an object of contempt, but I would not willingly be regarded as something worse. I wish, Sinclair, you would employ your agency to introduce me to Miss Travers and her father."

The request was made, and was granted. Both Mr. Travers and Lucy would willingly have avoided this collision; but my intreaties were so enthusi-

atically urged, that, at length, they capitulated ; and declared that it was impossible to refuse a request advanced by one to whom they were so deeply indebted. With a palpitating heart and trembling voice, I introduced Lord Leicester to my friends.

You know the ineffable grace which accompanied all that was said or done by Harry Leicester. You know the sweetness of his tones,—the beauty of his every motion,—the entire nobility of his appearance. There was nothing artificial or constrained in his gracefulness ; in him all was spontaneous and natural ; he could not be other than he was. He borrowed no light from his title ; but threw a splendour over the title he bore.

This is only a prelude to an announcement of Harry Leicester's entire success. He entered the room as a criminal,—a mark of contempt and aversion,—he departed an object of admiration, I may almost say, of affection and esteem.

"That is a fine fellow," said Mr. Travers, when Lord Leicester had departed ; "and young men will be thoughtless at times."

"It is a thousand pities," said Lucy, "that so generous and frank-hearted a creature should be spoiled by the profligacy of the world."

“ You are quite right, Miss Travers,” I responded ;
“ Harry Leicester would be the glory of the creation, if he were not so unfortunately wild.”

And here, my friend, cruel as it may be, I shall bring this letter suddenly to a conclusion. It has increased itself to unexpected dimensions ; for I have been far more discursive than I purposed. But as I have been writing about one whom you know, and in whose fate I am sure you must be interested, I have suffered myself to enter into details which, under any other circumstances, you would have been spared.

Such are the contents of the second letter which I received from Everard Sinclair, or rather, I should say, the second manuscript ; for the narrative which I have just transcribed, was written upon several sheets of foolscap, stitched together in the form of a book ; and transmitted to me through the agency of an old school-fellow, who held a subordinate situation in the India House. I have struck out from his letter such minor details as served not to illustrate my friend’s history. The next papers which I shall offer to the reader, are some portions of a diary, which Everard sent me, and which he had kept from the first day after leaving school. The former part of this journal

has been anticipated by the letters which I have already transcribed ; from the latter, I shall extract such scattered passages, as will most readily furnish the reader with a knowledge of the events which occurred to, and the feelings which actuated, my young friend. I trust that the selections which I have made, will not be found altogether uninteresting.

CHAPTER XIII.

Tell me, do you like this journal-way of writing ; is it
not tedious and dull ?

SWIFT.

I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will,—nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward ; what supports me, dost thou ask ?
The conscience, friend.

MILTON.

PASSAGES FROM EVERARD'S DIARY.

—— I HAD a long dialogue this morning with poor Mr. Travers. He told me the whole history of his misfortunes ; he spoke to me as to a tried friend : and never in my life have I heard a tale of such cold-blooded villany,—of such deliberate and outrageous fraud, as that to which I have just now given ear. Mr. Travers has been reduced from affluence to beggary by the machinations of a

heartless individual, who, above all others in the world, ought to have been the first to assist and protect him. "To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand;" and Mr. Travers was fleeced—*by his son!* I have not the heart to record this fulsome story in the pages of my diary. The world must be indeed depraved when the child lifts his hand against the father, and smites the author of his being. But human nature is many-sided. Thank God! the waters of life are not all equally polluted.—When Mr. Travers had finished his story, he put into my hands a letter, which he had that morning received from Lord Leicester. Blessings on the head of my old school-fellow! Though wild, and thoughtless, and inconsiderate, he has a heart noble as his name. What a generous letter was this, and withal so philosophical!

To —— Travers, Esq.

My dear Sir,

However unpleasant the circumstances under which I have become acquainted with you may be, I cannot but think myself fortunate in having accidentally introduced myself to your notice, and in having placed myself in a situation thereby to do, at all events, one act of justice. I will drop all

preliminary formalities ; I am but an indifferent framer of such things ; and therefore I had better at once declare my intentions in writing to you. I am given to understand that you are poor ; I have seen enough of you to know, that you have not always laboured under such circumstances. You have no right in the world to endure “ the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,” whilst I, an unworthy creature, am smiled upon by the sunshine of prosperity. Mr. Travers, I am rich,—rich beyond my necessities,—rich beyond my deserts. You, on the other hand, have less than your necessities require ; less than your merits deserve. I am a young man, unconnected ; you are declining into the valley of years, and have a child to support and provide for. Mind, sir, I seek to confer upon you no favour. Good God ! is it just and fitting that I should wallow in riches, whilst you are without a daily competence ? The money which I possess is mine by the law of the land ; it is yours by the law of nature. Nature is more cogent than the law ; its claims are to be satisfied first. I set aside all conventionalities. The offer which I now make to you rests upon a broad philosophical basis. The inclosed is yours,—yours by every law of nature and justice. You are not my debtor. I only present you with your own. What I have done, sir, in this instance, I

have felt myself morally obliged to do. You are under no obligation but to accept what is here offered by

LEICESTER.

This letter was accompanied by a draft upon Messrs. — and Co., bankers, for the sum of five hundred pounds.

Mr. Travers smiled as I returned the letter.—“Ah !” he said, “the young lord has a good heart and a generous disposition; but I am mightily amused by his philosophy. He must reason a little better, before he can persuade me as to the truth of his ‘communion-of-property’ doctrines. I am sorry to occasion him an hour’s pain,—but, destitute as my poor Lucy will be,”—and the smile passed away from his countenance,—“I cannot accept Lord Leicester’s donation. For I am not sufficiently a disciple of the ‘political-justice’ system to believe that this money is my own.”

I fancy that my cheek blushed as he uttered this last sentence——

* * * *

—— The more I see of Mr. Travers, the more I admire the independent manliness of his character. The more I see of his beautiful daughter, the more impressed I am with the loveliness of her disposition. It is even as Mrs. Oliver suspected. Lucy

has been working for the daily bread of her father and herself. The infirmity of Mr. Travers, which is not the result of age, but of disease, incapacitates him from any manual labour, and this is to him, I am sure, "the most unkindest cut of all" which afflicts him. Good God! and shall I suffer this lovely young martyr to expose herself any longer to the insolence of tradesmen, and the violence of all the young roués in the streets? There is nothing unfeminine in Lucy's occupations,—the construction of card-racks and the working of ottomans, are not employments looked upon by society as too mean for the highest in the land; but to trade,—to barter,—to dispose of her little wares in person,—to traverse the multitudinous city on her way to the houses of the dealers,—this must not be suffered. *I* will be Lucy's agent: I will carry her merchandize to the traders. I shall, at all events, be allowed to do this: though Mr. Travers will accept of no pecuniary assistance, he will not reject an offer of my labour in his service. My own monied resources are diminishing sensibly; and poverty is beginning to stare me in the face. Yet, am I poor? I have health, and strength, and an intellect as yet unimpaired. "Money," saith Ben Johnson, in his *Discoveries*, "never made any man rich, but his mind. He that can order himself to the law of nature, is not only without the sense,

but without the fear of poverty." Yet something must be done ; it is fitting that I should bestir myself,—but to what purpose? I have already failed once, and it is too evident that I am little likely ever to realize an independence by my labours in the field of literature. The world will not pay money to be abused, and it is difficult to persuade society that I am not the enemy, but the friend, of my race. And yet shall I desist for this? No, I will bear on ; I have faith, and I will abide the day appointed.

* . * * *

It has lately occurred to me to commence a work which, in the form of an interesting narrative, shall embody my philosophical opinions, — a work, which, through the medium of fiction, shall convey truth to them who read it. I must appeal to the reason, by awakening the sympathies of my fellows. It was the woman, who seduced the man into tasting of the tree of knowledge. Patiently, silently, and in obscurity, I will labour on at my task of love. If I can raise one stone upon another of the pyramid of truth, I shall not have exerted myself in vain.

* * * *

I am now constantly in the society of Mr. Travers and his daughter. Lucy is the very incarnation of gentleness, purity, and devotion. What a beautiful

picture of affection is every day presented to my sight, when I see that loveliest of daughters administering to the wants of her sick father. Mr. Travers is wearing away; the physicians tell me it is not probable that he will survive many weeks longer,—and then what is to become of Lucy? There are thoughts agitating my bosom,—made up, various, and contending emotions; they are the multiform progeny of love,—such as I will not, I cannot define.

* * * * *

Lucy continues her painting, and her needlework, and I carry them, when they are finished, to a woman, who has several stalls in the Soho bazaar. It gives me unbounded satisfaction to be able to assist her in this manner. But this is not all. As I am far from being an indifferent draughtsman myself, and have very fair notions of design, I am able materially to assist in the formation of these elegant little bijouteries, to which Lucy appropriates her spare time. I have painted several screens, and some blotting-paper cases; and they exhibit no contemptible skill in the new branch of the arts to which I have devoted myself. How my old and dear companion, Claude Jerningham, would laugh to see his philosophical friend employing his time upon the fabrication of gew-gaws. Some might consider such an occupation degrading to a man and a scholar. *I con-*

sider nothing degrading which furnishes me with the necessaries of life, and is utterly harmless to the community. Rousseau, whilst employed upon the composition of his undying works, copied music for a wretched pittance, and laboured on, independently, spurning all thoughts of profit to be derived from the product of his brain. His manual labour was for himself; his intellectual exertions for the world. I spend my mornings happily enough in this species of occupation; how can I do otherwise, when Lucy is my fellow-labourer in the vineyard?

* * * * *

I have confessed my love,—yet what need of such a confession? My looks and actions must have betrayed what my tongue has hesitated to utter. Yet now, at length, I *have* spoken. I have poured out, as from an o'er-brimming vessel, the feelings which I have garnered up in my heart. I have asked, and in a kindred spirit have I been answered by Lucy Travers. Oh! what a boundless treasure,—what a jewel beyond all price, is the heart of such a gentle girl! The chalice of my joy runs over;—I am no longer an unblest, solitary being, treading the paths of desolation. I am happy,—nay, more, I am *beloved*; and in that one word is comprehended all that is most blissful upon earth. What a beautiful thing is affection! Like the tree which the Prophet of Israel cast into the

waters of Marah, it sweetens the bitter fountain of life. It is even as the "wondrous alchemy" of Medea, the sorceress,

Which, wheresoe'er it fell, made the earth gleam
With bright flowers, and the wintry boughs exhale
From vernal blooms fresh fragrance.

—— I have been reading *Hartley on Man*;—a lovely, and benevolent, and great mind, was that of David Hartley. His observations *on the conduct of life*, contain the essence of Christian morality. God grant me power to shape the courses of my behaviour according to the doctrines of this book! If I had seen this work years ago, I should be other than I am now; if my boyish imagination had dwelt upon the passages of this philosophy, and had not been deluded by the wild profaneness of the French revolutionary metaphysical writers, I should have served my God better,—I should have loved my brethren more. But it is idle to talk of what might have been. * * * I have just lighted upon a passage in Owen Feltham's *Resolves*, the truth of which harasses and annoys me.—“Above all,” says this respectable writer, “let the *generous minde* beware *marrying poore*; for though he cares the least for *wealth*, yet he will be most galled with the *want* of it.” Assuredly I am poor, and I would not be ungenerous.

* * * * *

I, this morning, received a letter from Lord Leicester, dated North Britain. It appears that he is grouse shooting, with Lord ———. The object of his letter was to say that he had procured for me, if I pleased to accept it, the promise of an appointment in one of the Government offices. He knew that I was doing nothing, and, having lately ordered inquiries to be made as to the circumstances of my father's will, he knew also that I had little to depend upon. The appointment, which he had been the means of procuring for me, was one that would lead to something better; although the present emoluments were far from being inconsiderable, and the duties attached to the office did not exact, he said, very great attention.

This earnest of Leicester's forgetfulness has filled me with delightful sensations.—My spirits are more buoyant than they have been for days past. Not that I purpose to avail myself of Leicester's well-intentioned offer,—not that I intend to profit by the generosity of my old friend, for I will not become a stipendiary of government, whilst I look upon that government as corrupt. I will not assist, in however remote a degree, to propagate opinions, which I think obnoxious, nor relinquish my independence, by binding myself to the service of the state. I have not come to this determination indeliberately; I have thought deeply

on the subject. The temptation held out to me has been great, because it has not been merely selfish. By accepting the appointment thus offered, I shall secure the means of preserving my Lucy and her father from want. I shall place myself out of poverty's reach, and thus be enabled unmolested, to employ my leisure hours upon the work, about which I have thought so much, and the plan of which I have already conceived. But I must not do evil that good may spring from it; I must not make a sacrifice of my principles. It were but hollow sophistry, to say that another will perform the duties of the office which I have refused, and thus to reconcile, or rather to cheat, my conscience. Weak as I am,—infirm as are my resolutions,—I am not so pitiful a sophist,—such an empiric of morality,—as to do this.

* * * *

—— I remember having said once, that it would kill me to reside in London,—Good God!—what sights am I made spectator of, every time that I go forth into the crowded streets of this vast metropolis,—this emporium of sin and sorrow, where vice walks universally; now hand in hand with titled wealth, now embracing pennyless destitution. Is it possible for a wise man,—for a feeling man, for a thinking man,—to walk abroad, in this great city, without an oppressive sense of sick-

ness,—a weight of unutterable anguish pressing upon his distressed soul? I presume not to be wise, but I am benevolent,—benevolent in its narrowest acceptation,—I *wish well* to my fellow-creatures; I would fain see them all happy,—or, rather virtuous, for virtue is happiness; yet, when I traverse the multitudinous streets, what do I see? What do I feel? Wretchedness. “Father of mercy,” I exclaim, “and is it decreed that all these shall perish? It is not that I see penury, pain, starvation, disease; all these things will end with life: but crime, which is eternal agony, glares upon me at every turn. The drunkard reels out of the tavern, the lecher out of the stews, the blasphemous man rails in the broad day-light, and laughs to scorn the commands of his Creator. The extortioner sits in his warehouse, counting his ill-gotten wealth, with the quick ear of a mole to the tread of his customers, though he is even as the deaf adder, when the harsh voice of suppliant poverty assails him with the cry of “Food.” And shall all these men perish eternally? Shall they not save their souls alive? Is there no hope for all these after death? Merciful Father! my heart dies within me, when I think of the fewness of thine elect!—And how small are my powers! What can I do? The voice of the petitioner, in every street, smites upon my ear;—and then I am forced to

gentle slumber ; and she sat, still plying her silent task, ever and anon looking anxiously up to the pale face of her sire. But still he slept peacefully, and Lucy congratulated herself on the benefit Mr. Travers would derive from so profound and procrastinated a slumber. Presently, however, she was reminded, by hearing the chimes of a neighbouring clock, that it was the hour, at which her father was accustomed to take his daily medicine ; so she rose up, and having poured out the draft, she tapped him gently on the shoulder ; but he moved not, neither did he open his eyes. Again,—again,—again she repeated her gentle warning, but still Mr. Travers stirred not. “ Dearest father,” she said, “ it is I, Lucy, your daughter ; wake up, I have brought you your medicine.” But the old man returned no answer.—And then Lucy knew, that her father’s soul had quitted its tenement of clay. “ He died and gave no sign.”

* * * *

[The three following pages of Everard’s diary are occupied with an account of the preparations which he was making for Mr. Travers’s funeral, and the result of several communications which he had made to, and received from, the relatives of the dead man. I feel great repugnance at being compelled in this manner, to curtail so much of my friend’s journal, because every page serves to throw

an additional radiance over the character of Everard Sinclair, and to develop the gentle beauties of Lucy Travers's feminine disposition. But the necessity I feel to be unavoidable, for my extracts have already been most copious.

It appears, from the journal, that the conduct of Lucy's relations was heartless, and unnatural in the extreme. Everard, immediately upon the decease of Mr. Travers, applied to different members of the family individually, to receive Lucy amongst them, until the grief for her father's loss was in some measure dissipated by time. His applications, in every instance, were unsuccessful; and the reception he met with from the parties concerned, eminently repulsive and insulting. After some time, Lucy remembered that a distant connexion of her own, residing in the country, and living upon the proceeds of a small farm, had always expressed herself in such flattering terms of Mr. Travers, and had lately written such professions of kindness to her, that perhaps an application to this individual, might be productive of beneficial results. This woman had known affliction; she knew, therefore, how to pity it. Everard immediately sent a letter to Mrs. —, acquainting her with all that had taken place, and requesting her, if she could possibly contrive it,—not to receive Lucy into her own house,—but to remove

herself to the metropolis, and to reside for a few weeks with Miss Travers, in —— Street. The good lady acceded to the proposals, and Lucy's delicate feelings were thus spared the mortification of being obliged to dwell unprotected, beneath the same roof with her affianced husband. Everard all this time furnished them with the means of subsistence; he had been compelled to make a sale of several small effects to defray the expenses of Mr. Travers's funeral, and now he was necessitated, by a variety of honourable devices, to meet the daily charges incurred by three individuals; for Lucy's friend was herself in narrow circumstances, and Everard would not suffer her to advance any money for their subsistence. This part of the journal was painfully interesting to me. The struggles which my poor friend went through, to keep out from his doors, actual want,—the thousand petty mortifications of poverty,—are all recorded, and commented upon in the spirit more of an angel than of a human creature.]

* * * *

—— I am married. I have entered into a new state,—I am no longer an unconnected being. Another clings to me for support,—another's destiny is interwoven with my own. My situation is doubly responsible. My joys and sorrows are to be communicated and shared by another. Every

must not expose my Lucy to poverty times, I feel my principles warring against God only knows which will be victorious. Lucy is too excellent a creature to be degraded by worldly delights, which are to be pursued in an unworthy manner, by the sacrifice of her independence. She is full of patient denying heroism ; she has shown herself enduring, and has suffered, with the martyr. But why should suffering and death be upon one so excellent and pure?—The mother my wife is failing. She must be removed from the confined air of this unhealthy metropolis, must breathe a purer atmosphere, and leave her sedentary life, or the bloom of health will fade from that delicate cheek for ever. I must find a lodging for her in the country. Yet every turn, makes mouths at me, and speaks bitterly. I once thought of writing to my father for I have a *right* to claim his assistance not ; for he has ever despised me, and

in the face ; but my wife !—Oh, Owen Feltham ! thou hast indeed spoken the truth ! And yet, it were impossible that any feelings of desolation should enter into my soul ; for there is a light ever shining which illumines the darkness of my despair, —a light did I say ? are there not *two* lights ?—my Lucy and my God.—Like the prophet Elijah, in that beautiful passage of Scripture, I see a little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, which, after a long drought of happiness, telleth me that rain is not afar off ; and when my heart faileth me, and my spirits sink, and I look into the face of my wife and think of my scanty resources, an inward power supports me, and I exclaim with the man of God, “ Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain.”

CHAPTER XIV.

—— Collect my servants and instruct
To make out each their claims unto the end
Of their respective terms, and give them in
To my steward. Him and them apprise, good
That I keep house no more, and as you go,
Call at my coach-maker's and bid him stop
The carriage I bespoke. The one I have
Send with my horses to the mart whereat
Such things are sold by auction.

SHERIDAN

Give me thy hand. I will not say thou'rt welc
That is the common road of common friends.
I am glad I have thee here. Oh ! I want wor
To let thee know my heart.

“Is the baboo in the house?” I inquired of the bearer in attendance. A baboo is a native man of business, a kind of head servant, clerk, steward, and broker.

“He is, your highness.”

“Send him to me immediately,” And forthwith the bearer vanished.

Presently the baboo appeared, making a thousand salaams.

“Baboo, I have business for you; plenty of business,” said I; “how many bearers have I?”

“Master, sirdar-bearer got, two mate-bearers got, six palki-bearers got. Master *nine* bearers got.”

“Nine,—very well; and what other servants?”

“Master got khansamaun, two khitmudgars got, one chokri got;” and thus he went on enumerating to the number of about twenty-five; but I may as well omit the enumeration, as it would be all heathen-greek to the reader.

When he had done, I put on an unusually solemn face; and the baboo stood in rigid astonishment, wondering what tragedy was to succeed a prologue of such a singular nature.

“Now, baboo, I have no occasion for all these men. I can do just as well with one-third of the number; in fact, I think that I shall do rather better; so discharge all the bearers but the sirdar-

bearer ; and let me have one khitmudgar, one syees (groom), and one grass-cutter."

"But master four, five horses got ; what become of horses, if no syees ?" asked the baboo, with a look of respectful astonishment. He thought that my senses had gone from me, and that he was holding converse with a madman.

"Send them to out-cry next week," said I.—
"Give me pen and ink, and I will draw up the advertisement. I intend to keep only the brown Cape horse, which I bought at Mr. ——'s auction. The rest are to be sold immediately."

"Sold !—and master's buggy ?"

"To be sold, likewise."

"And the palki ?"—

"And the palki :—see that this *chit* (note) is sent to Tulloh *sahib* ; and, hark you, baboo, take my *hookah* to the bazaar, and learn how much you can get for it."

"And master's books ?" asked the baboo.

"My books ; let me consider :"—and then, after a long pause, "no ; I shall keep *them*." It is a hard thing to part with one's books ; it is like parting with one's children.

"And *me*, master's baboo ; not give *juwab* to baboo ; do master's business still ; save master plenty, plenty rupees ;" and the baboo extended his arms, pressed together the palms of his hands,

laid his head upon his left shoulder, and looked irresistibly winning.

“ Why, baboo, I have found you tolerably honest; (here the baboo, making a profound salaam, in recognition of the compliment, bent double his ghee-inflated* body, and swept the floor with the folds of his turban. A great effort, indeed, was this obeisance, for the good baboo’s body corporate was somewhat distinguished for its obesity; and when he resumed his perpendicular, his face was swollen with the exertion he had made, and a copious stream of perspiration rolled down his gelatinous cheeks.) “ I have found you tolerably honest, that is to say, your bills have never exceeded more than double their legitimate amount; and, by monopolizing the right of imposition, you have saved me from the roguery of the subordinates, and suffered no one to cheat but yourself. On the whole, therefore, I have every reason to be perfectly satisfied with you, baboo; and, in consideration of the services you have rendered me, I shall retain you at all events, until I have contrived to procure you a new master. Thus much for the

* *Ghee* is clarified butter. Fat men are held in especial veneration by the natives of India. When a man has amassed a little money, his first care is to get fat; it makes him respected: clarified butter is a capital thing for increasing the oily properties of the flesh.

and the baboo took his departure with
“And now,” I soliloquized, “and
days, I shall have in my possession se
rupees, which will relieve, at all event
the wants of poor Everard Sinclair.
my fool-hardy extravagance, that ha
purse to the very dregs, and compe
well, well, it is only the duty of a C
sell all that I have, and give it to the p
done so. And this reflection made m
exhilarated; I started from my recumb
and set my body in motion. I walked
I sang; I rubbed together the palms of
and paced the floor of my ample apar
an unwonted elasticity of step; to
grateful spirit to Omnipotence, and
my own magnanimous self-denial. An
what had I done? Nothing. Yet I co
myself largely. I was like Parson Adam
of his wealth with a poor half-guinea in

I had not rejoiced very long.

amassed. It was one thing to bestow in imagination, another to bestow in reality ; for there were fifteen thousand miles of water between the giver and the receiver.

I cast about in my mind, how I might best encompass this difficulty ; and, at length, it occurred to me that there was no better plan than to remit the money to my uncle, beseeching him that he would use every exertion to discover the residence of my poor friend. So I drew up a letter, with a short sketch of Everard's past history, that I might furnish every clue to the discovery of his present residence. It will be remembered, that in the latter part of his journal, Sinclair intimated an intention of removing from the metropolis to the country, for the benefit of his wife's health ; but this, vague as it was, was all the knowledge I possessed of my poor friend's locomotive designs.

But, before I had realized the money, which I thus prospectively devoted to Everard, an accident happened, which prevented me from putting my intentions into execution. I was seized with a severe febrile disorder, which prostrated me upon a bed of sickness, and actually threatened to annihilate me.

I will not inflict upon my readers even a partial account of my sufferings. Be it enough to say,

...; and time restored me, original vigour, but to a comparative soundness, which, however, was but a truce, for the delight of convalescence that I overstepped the boundaries of, mistaking the absence of disease for the return of health, I soon found myself stretched on a bed of sickness, which there was very little chance indeed of my ever being enabled to quit.

However, I cheated death a second time, and it was deemed advisable by the physician, that I should take my departure in search of health, by the first ship. The Medical Board and the Supreme Council coincided in the justice of this opinion, and I was by no means averse from prosecution, recommended by such high authorities. I secured a passage in the first vessel bound for the port of London.

Nothing very particular happened during my voyage, unless it were, that passing up the river. I had the pleasure of

father Death ; for the surgeon (notwithstanding that, out of thirty passengers, there were only three sound in the ship) was no better acquainted with surgery than the boatswain, nor half so scientific in anatomy as the butcher of the good ship * * *.

I have drawn up a detailed account of my sufferings during this period ; but, deeming that it would not be received with much indulgence by the reader, I shall not obtrude it into my book ; neither, for the same reason, shall I enlarge upon my homeward travels, nor tell how we voyaged on—

For many a day and many a dreadful night
Incessant labouring round the stormy Cape ;

ardently longing, week after week, month after month, for the expiration of our seamanship. If any one of my readers should feel curious upon this subject, I beg leave to refer him forthwith to some of those notable collections of voyages by Hakluyts, Lord Valencia, &c.; in short, to any marine journal or log-book which may have been printed or preserved since that great enemy to mankind, Vasco de Gama, had the infelicity to double the Cape for the first time, in the year of our Lord, 1497 ; since all voyages are very much alike,—dull, tedious, comfortless, and monotonous.

Without any further peraphrasis, perhaps the reader will kindly imagine, that I am in that great

Not wishing to alarm my friend and ghost-like appearance, I took up my quarters at an hotel and apprized Mr. Jerningham of my return; he was overjoyed to see me. Every symptom of the most entire cordiality. All other feelings were the one delight of embracing him: a tear of rapturous excitement glistened and his voice faltered as he blessed me. His situation was painful to witness; he was restored to health, and was content with the assurance of my recovery; but, when his transports of joy were over, he remembered the sufferings I had endured; yet he did not indeed dread to inquire into the cause of my malady. He remained with me at the hotel, declaring that he could not lose the time that would be spent upon our going out into the street; every

• It sounds well

such an occasion as this being, as he said, of the utmost value.

“To —— street, uncle!” I exclaimed: “You have not deserted Heathfield, I hope.”

“Yes, Claude, I have,” returned my uncle; “various alterations have taken place since you quitted England, my dear nephew. I am in Parliament; you see before you one of the members for the borough of * * * *. I have abandoned the forum for the senate-house; I have gone my last circuit, and am now enjoying the *otium cum dignitate* of a superannuated old barrister.”

I smiled.—“And my brother Frederick?”——

“Is at Oxford. He hath kept many terms there, and appertaineth to B—— College. He tells me that he is studying most assiduously, and will take his degree early next year.”

“With honours, of course;—but, uncle, this, if I mistake not, is long-vacation time.”

“True; but your brother is a reading man, and as he was never of a very sociable turn of mind, he prefers passing his vacation in the solitude of a deserted university. I understand that he is quite sure of a first class in Humanities, and that if he has not the worst luck in the world, he will signalize himself by a ‘double first.’”

“I am glad to hear it; by the bye, uncle, do

...and, I do; replied my
fine ingenuous youth, and I reje
not forgotten him."

"Forgotten him! God forbid
you give me any information c
poor friend?" And then I acc
with the nature of the corresp
passed between Everard and my
the contents of Everard's letters,
most miserable correspondent.
writing, I hate writing letters.

"My dear Claude," said Mr
applaud the generosity of your s
enduring firmness of your frie
terested as I myself am in the fi
clair, I am afraid that I can give
ance. The father of your young
dead some years, and his br
Everard's brother,—is residing u
estate, as you know, in the count
friend, after quitting Dr. R——'s
to publish a volume of ———

though in vain, to ascertain the residence of young Sinclair."

"Everard suspected as much. But, uncle, do you know Mr. ——? My poor friend mentioned in his journal, the circumstance of his having been employed by that gentleman, whom he met at the British Museum, to transcribe the manuscript notes from the celebrated 'Oldys' Langbaine.'"

"It is fortunate enough," replied my uncle, "that Mr. —— is my particular friend. I will call upon him to-morrow morning; and whatever else I can do to assist you towards the discovery of your friend shall be done, Claude; you may fully rely upon my most earnest co-operations. And now, I see, dinner is coming; though never much addicted to the pleasures of the table, I almost envy you the *gusto*, with which, fresh from a long voyage, you will enjoy the good things of mine host, who is famous for one of the best *cuisinières* within the bills of mortality."

On the following day, my uncle was at the —— Hotel before noon. "And now, Claude, my boy," he exclaimed in a joyous voice, "you may ring the bell for your account, and be off without loss of time. Your rooms are quite ready for you in —— street; you will always find a home beneath my roof:—no thanks, Claude, you are not beholden to

me in the least.—Well, well; that will do; and hark you, my dear boy, stand upon no ceremony with your old uncle. Make an hotel of his house; there is nothing I like better than to be made a convenience of by young people. I lead but a dull sort of life myself, and youth is always fond of variety. Make —— street your head-quarters; go there, whenever you like, but never out of compliment to me. And hark you, Claude, one word more,—I have ordered Messrs. —— and Co., the bankers, to give you credit for three hundred a-year, which, added to your half-pay, or, whatever you of the Civil Service call it, will be enough to pay your tailor's bill, and a few little *et ceteras* of that kind. And now,—not a word of thanks,—if you talk about gratitude, I shall be off, I have called upon Mr. ——, relating to your friend Sinclair, but I have been able to elicit no further information than that which you are already possessed of: but we will consult together by and bye, as to the best course to be adopted. And now, my chariot is at the door; I long to see you once again beneath the roof of your old uncle.”

Surely there never existed a more kind-hearted man, than Matthew Jerningham. It is well worth a few years of exile to be welcomed home again in such a manner as this.

CHAPTER XV.

—

What think you of falling in love?

—Marry; I prythee, do, to make sport withal.

As You Like It.

—

ANOTHER, yet another branch upon the tree of my hopes was withered; and again I was thrown back upon my resources. I had already written to Dr. R——, concerning his late pupil, but no information was to be derived from this quarter. I had called at the house which formerly had been occupied by Mrs. Oliver, who, it will be remembered, was Everard's landlady; but Mrs. Oliver was no longer amongst the living, and from her successor I, of course, could learn nothing. I then bethought myself of Lord Leicester, but my old school-fellow was absent from London, and a letter

remaining hope was then centred
brother; and to some it may appear
expectations which I derived from
source were more bountiful and pro-
other. But to me they appeared ot-
knew that the independent spirit of m-
not allow him to seek assistance fr-
when they had gratuitously cast hi-
thought that I was sufficiently well ac-
the character of Squire Sinclair, hi-
decide that this ungentle relative wou-
tarily tender the assistance which I
been too proud to solicit.—So the star
waxed dim.

Yet, I said to myself, “I will perse-
is there that should forbid me to ho-
friend liveth, I will discover him; I
England throughout. I have youth,
strength,—and what is more, I have
concerns to divert my attention from
My thoughts and actions are entirely on
they shall be . . .

to devise, vigour to execute, constancy to bear;—these are the handmaids of success, and they will wait upon the goodness of my cause, whilst the star of a generous purpose will light me through the dark places of my enterprise.”

My uncle encouraged me in the undertaking. He said that he should be sorry to part from me; but he added, “I applaud your resolution. The motives which incite you to action are honourable, and worthy of admiration. The coldness of an unbending world might say that they savour of quixotry. Be it so; the world may be right; but, believe me, that a generous chivalry, though it may give birth to some extravagant actions, is a far more becoming ‘riband in the cap of youth,’ than an excess of illiberal wariness, the fruits of which are tamely correct; and which, if it occasions little evil, is productive of very little good. Go forth, my boy, and God speed you! You remember the fable of the husbandman, who dug up his field for a treasure: methinks I see that husbandman in you. Nothing is more beneficial than activity, either to the mind or to the body of a man. I would rather see you, the whole day, employed upon jumping over the chairs, than settling yourself down in idleness,—doing nothing, caring for nothing, hoping for nothing. My advice to you is this:—Set out on horseback for Oxford; you

... Oxford, you are not far distant
of your friend's brother. Call upon
intelligence; then proceed as circuit
direct you."

"You recommend me, then, to
horseback?"

"Yes. And that you may do this,
you a present of the bay horse you rode
whose capabilities you were pleased to
and young Watson shall accompany you
little chesnut, which you were looking
morning. The boy is a light weight, and
he is a smart, active lad, with a very taste
of dressing a horse.—By the bye, I must
a purchase I made this morning,—a fine
the Marquis of Newcastle, *de l'Art de
Chevaux*. Well, boy, I recommend
don't interrupt me with your thanks;—
to say——"

My uncle proceeded to inform me that
feel no anxiety about my travelling expenses
well known to me.

supply, and which morality sanctions. I am an old man, Claude; I am rich; I have no children of my own;"—and a smile of blended affection and regret passed across his expressive countenance.

It was a fine morning in one of the earlier months of autumn, when I set out upon my journey towards Oxford. The sun shone brightly upon my path, and the face of nature looked unwontedly jocund. There was an exhilarating freshness in the air which rendered exertion grateful,—a tenuity and clearness in the atmosphere, which dazzled not, but invigorated the sight, by developing the distant landscape, which, in blended patches of green and yellow, stretched itself out like a garment; for it was harvest season, and the corn was ripe in the fields. When I had left the metropolis behind me, and had escaped from its smoky influences, my animal spirits became unusually buoyant. All the better part of my nature was making sweet harmony in my soul; I looked upon all whom I passed with a benignant eye; and gave to each one a silent blessing. My horse, "like a proud sea under me," seemed to sympathise with the emotions of his rider; for his limbs were unusually elastic, and he moved onward with a playful impulse, arching his fine neck, and sniffing the perfumed air. I am sure that there was not one upon

the road whose heart was so joyous as mine, nor one who would more readily have bestowed a portion of that joyousness upon his neighbours. A fine morning and a fine horse,—a light road and a heavy purse ; hope within me, and health without ; 'twere strange if I had not been contented.

It happened that the course of my journey lay somewhere in the direction of Heathfield. Heathfield, that beloved spot, endeared to me by my boyish recollections, the memory of which awakened in my mind a thousand beautiful associations, all breathing the spirit of rejuvenescence, and hallowing the feelings of the present, by rekindling many of the past. Exceeding happy was I at Heathfield. I loved the house wherein I lived ; I loved the neighbourhood ; and I loved the neighbours—every one of them. I had dwelt fourteen years in that village, the greatest part of my life, and the happiest. I was acquainted with every house in the place ; with the windings of every pathway ; with the names and initials carved upon the surface of every tree. I might have picked out my way blindfold from the dwelling that was once my uncle's, to any other abode in the village ; and there was a time when every voice was familiar to my boyish ears ; and not a dog, but that I could point to its owner. I thought of all these things as I rode along ; and I asked myself,

“ Shall I pass this spot?—shall Heathfield be unvisited?”

There was one family in the village, which I remembered with the pleasantest feelings imaginable; and that was the family of the rector. Mr. Hervey had once three children; when I first knew him, a son and two daughters. But the eldest girl, as I learned from my uncle, had married, and the boy had died; and now there was only Ellen. But Ellen was the youngest and the most beloved; and, whilst all-in-all to her parents, she was the delight of the whole village; for she was very kind to the poor.

Now Ellen Hervey and I, when quite children, had loved one another. *Love* is a word not to be profaned, so I will say that we *clave* to one another. “ If you were to give the name of *Hervey* to a dog, I should love it,” said Samuel Johnson. Now, I could not love a dog under any name; but I was very fond of Ellen Hervey.

It was a foolish sort of infantine preference, and it was much talked of in the village. We liked to be in company with each other; and we went out together in the fields; and, when we sat side by side, the day was never too long. And then, again, “ children’s parties ” were frequent in the neighbourhood of Heathfield; and Ellen and I would dance together for the whole livelong evening, and not

the fair young creature
were irksome to me, and I would
quit of them; for my play-fellows
and Ellen was called, amongst them,
But Ellen did not care for this.

However, I was very much annoyed
was four years older than Ellen; and
just at the very threshold of life, constant
disparity of age. It is the nature of
they love, to fix upon some one much
themselves; young affection has an up
and I was forced to look down upon her
in process of time, it fell out, that I
the young maiden's advances with kindness
ments, and I smiled upon her; for,
truth, my vanity was much flattered.

Now, Ellen had a cousin, named
sometimes spent his holidays at the rectory
was a fine boy, with light flowing hair,
a fond eye upon Ellen. But it happened
was the favoured one; for I had many
advantages. of which --

together, the superiority was always on *my* side. There could not in the whole world have been a more amiable boy than Albert ; but he was the son of a poor gentleman, and was merely on *sufferance* at Heathfield. Now Albert and I fought. I was the strongest boy of the two, so poor Albert was beaten. He was very low-spirited after this ; so I took pity on him and lent him my pony, and was otherwise kindly disposed towards him. But he never held up his head as before ; for Ellen still smiled upon *me*.

When I went out to India, I was a man, whilst Ellen was still in the nursery ; so that I treated her in a childish manner ; I was kind to her and made her little presents ; and I taught her to *read Greek*. I did not fear to be laughed at then, for I mixed with full-grown people, and I spoke patronizingly to Ellen. But I fondled the young thing, and called her my “little favourite ;” and when I went to dine with her father, I would go there before the time, that I might drink tea with Ellen up stairs ; for she was scarcely fourteen years old, and not very tall of her age ; besides, she was still in the nursery.

But she was the prettiest little creature in the world, and I wish that she had been my sister ; for I had no sister of my own, and Ellen was made for a *pet*. She was so gentle, and so full of inno-

... a charming soul. It was so delicate: yet, withal, it was rounded, that she might have stood for Psyche, in the first purity of a nymph, and not yet an immortal.

Ellen was a fragile branch of a no tree. Her complexion was so clear: parent, you would have thought that shone through it. The whole aspect betokened less of health than of loveliness. Her cheeks were like lilies at sun-set, when the blush of day falls upon them; they were utterly pale. And then she had the most golden hair, streaming like spun gold, and glittering quite brightly in the sun; with the bluest eyes, and the tiniest little hands that ever were seen in the universe. I have looked at her and felt quite sad. I would have said, "She is too little earth long in this world."

As I rode on, I thought of Ellen; and of her endearing qualities. I would have said, "She is too little earth long in this world."

heaved a deep sigh ; and thinking that I was waxing sentimental, I urged my horse into a brisk trot ; but,—I turned his head towards Heathfield.

Half an hour's sharp riding, and I was opposite Mr. Hervey's rectory. There was a large oak-tree on the opposite side of the road : it was said to be many centuries old ; for it was quite hollow, and there was a seat within it ; and often, in my boyish days, had I concealed myself there out of frolic ;—and there were the initials, E. H., and C. J. carved, in rude characters upon the bark, and girt about with a doubtful circle, very unmathematically described. But it was the work of Ellen and myself ; and we were mere children when we did it.

I drew up my horse beside the oak. There was a view, from this spot, of the house, which had erst been tenanted by my uncle ; and, as I took pleasure in limning, I determined to make a sketch of the place ; and, for that purpose, I dismounted beneath the oak.

I had very fair knowledge of the picturesque ; and I was looked upon as an able draftsman. It was my custom, whenever I went abroad, to carry a small sketch-book along with me ; and now, that I had set out upon my travels, I had taken care to provide myself with apparatus, in case I should fall

... of my horse, I
road and fell a-drawing.

The oak-tree, and the bank behind
fore-ground on one side of the picture
a large wood stretching out at the
mid-distance was my uncle's house,
nest of greenery. There was a c
front of it; and some cows grazing;
no smoke rising from the chimnies;
was untenanted, and the garden full
there was silence within, and neq
which made me very sad to think
nothing which strikes into the heart
ing of melancholy, or a stronger sens
insignificance, than the sight of a h
we have lived many years, and where
verned our little monarchy, now d
crumbling into decay, with not a
former inhabitants.

The oak-tree, behind which I sto
at the turning of the road. I had fini
line of the tree and I was . . .

when, from the opposite side of the tree, a young maiden emerged into sight, carrying a little basket and appparelled in white raiment. And, I knew, by the yellow locks which escaped from beneath her bonnet, that the young maid was Ellen Hervey.

She started when first she saw me. She had come so suddenly upon the group, that the sight of my two horses, my groom, and my pictorial self, but a few short yards in advance of, and directly fronting, her, beneath the oak, startled her maiden modesty, and she stood still as not liking to proceed; but, when she again ventured to look up, and hurriedly tracing the lineaments of my face, bethought herself that she had traced them before,—the colour mounted suddenly to her cheeks, and then, unwilling to tarry there, as suddenly disappeared in a moment, leaving her discoursing complexion of an ashy and universal whiteness. She first thought that she saw Claude Jerningham; and then she thought that it was impossible; for she knew that I was in the “land of the stranger,” and she had not yet heard of my return.

But I advanced, and took her by the hand;—she trembled all over, but spake not. “Ellen,” I said, “have you forgotten me?”

“Forgotten you!—oh! no, Claude;—I mean Mr. Jerningham. I remember your voice and your features; I cannot be mistaken; but I thought—”

“You thought that I was far away;—you thought that I was pining beneath the tropics,—an exile from home; an outcast from my friends, and never again to visit Heathfield. This, Ellen, is what I *have been*; but am I not rewarded *now*?—I am in health, at Heathfield, and very happy.”

And Ellen repeated the word “*Happy*.”

“Look at this sketch;—but, stay; shall I call you Miss Hervey, or Ellen?”

The girl smiled; and, blushing faintly, replied to my question by another: “What name were you wont to call me, before you went away to India?”

“Ellen,—oh! always Ellen; and now look at my sketch. There is the old house, and the common, and the old tree; and look,—can you decypher those characters, E. H., and C. J.?—What mean they; and why are they inscribed in that circle?”

And Ellen blushed again; but this time a deeper tint diffused itself over her cheek, and she said, “Shall we go in? Mamma will be so glad to see you. Now tell me what brought you to England?”

“I will tell you all about it anon; for the

present, let one word suffice,—*sickness*;" and I looked into her face.

"*Sickness*?—Oh! not that;" and her face was exceeding pale.

"You see that I am well now; I never was better, Ellen. But how are *you*?—and how is Mr. Hervey, and your mother, Ellen? I make full use of the liberty of address you have allowed me."

"Oh! poor Papa! He was never in very strong health, though always, you know, remarkably active. He did all the duty himself, and he knew every soul in the parish; and though there was much poverty, there was never any want in the village; for Papa was exceedingly kind. But it happened, about twelve months ago, that an aunt of Mamma's died, and she left all her money to us; and then it was that Papa was persuaded to give up his parochial duties, though he did not much like it at first. But at last he consented, and procured a curate, who now does the whole duty, and poor Papa, since his time has been unoccupied, has never been the same person; for, although he is stronger and stouter, he has not the same good spirits; and he is full of forebodings, which distress him; and he entertains the strangest fancies; and I fear that he is a confirmed—*hypochondriac*."

By this time we had passed the Rectory gates,

and threaded the garden walk, which led to the front door of the Parsonage. It was the prettiest Rectory imaginable, and had not very long been built; for, during my Uncle's residence at Heathfield, the old house, which was in a very tottering condition, had been partially blown down; and several of the neighbouring gentlemen, headed by Uncle Matthew, had raised a subscription to erect a new parsonage-house upon the site of the ancient edifice; for Mr. Hervey was much esteemed by his parishioners.

We opened the door, and were about to enter. Ellen had already passed, and my foot was upon the threshold, when the strangest exhibition greeted me that ever I had witnessed in my life. Mr. Hervey (for I knew that it was he by the clerical habiliments which he wore) was groping about the hall, with a bandage tied over his eyes, so as entirely to exclude the daylight, and a stick, which he extended in advance of him, to feel his way about the house. He had grown, since I last saw him, prodigiously rotund in his person, and whereas he had lately worn a somewhat unclerical profusion of hair, nothing but a bald polished scalp was visible, unmarked by one capillary vestige, and bespeaking the daily excursions of the razor. But, denuded as was his head altogether of natural and artificial covering, his lower extremities were en-

cased in a bountiful provision of teguments,—wrapper imposed upon wrapper, descending adown his legs, and winding themselves round about his feet, until his crural members had the appearance, each one, of half a dumb-bell, or of a yearling infant in swaddling clothes. Thus accoutred was he groping about the hall, after the manner of one who playeth at the game called “blind man’s buff,” in all the agonies of a self-imposed darkness,—the perspiration standing upon his forehead like tears on a monumental bust; and the multiplied cinctures around his legs assimilating the motions of the reverend gentleman to those of a gouty elephant, or a cat set adrift upon walnut-shells.

“Papa!” said Ellen, as we entered; and Mr. Hervey walked straight forward, attracted by the voice of his daughter, exclaiming, “Yes, my love:” but not deigning to remove the bandages which obscured his sight. Onward, with outstretched arms, he advanced to salute his daughter, and, innocent of our double presence,—before Ellen could manage to interpose herself,—the hypochondriac had cast his arms around my neck, and saluted me with a paternal osculation.

But it happened that the superficies of my face, being somewhat of an hirsute nature, the lips of the reverend gentleman were sensible of having alighted upon a substance which, although it was

recognised as flesh, was not quite so grateful to the touch as that which they had been accustomed to regale upon. All the sleek and delicate softness of the tender feminine cheek was found wanting in this masculine embrace; and the saluting organ of Mr. Hervey, uninformed by the directing eyes, drew back, disappointed and aghast, from a contact so little refreshing:—like Ixion, when he embraced the cloud, deeming that a goddess was in his arms, or a school-boy pilfering in the dark, when he gets hold of blacking for treacle,—or a child, cozened by its parents, with the hostile powder lurking beneath the friendly raspberry jam, did the lips of the Reverend Mr. Hervey revolt at their encounter with my beard; and, retreating with a nauseated air, unmindful of their master's holy orders, they uttered, with an unseemly vehemence, the unclerical exclamation of "The devil!" whilst, at the same time, the hands of the divine, energetically performing their functions, tore aside from his benighted vision the veil of delusion which had obscured it; and, behold! he stared in my face.

"Papa," said Ellen, "you mistake; this is our friend Mr. Jerningham."

"Bless me! and so it is," said the Reverend Mr. Hervey. "It is Claude Jerningham, or one like him. How camest thou at Heathfield, boy? You will find the place much altered, I'm afraid."

I briefly informed Mr. Hervey of the circumstances which had led to my return; and I expressed myself in terms of regret at perceiving him afflicted with the gout.

Ellen smiled; but it was a melancholy smile; and her father resumed,

“Fever!—ah, fever! A great enemy to man is fever. But the remedy is easy,—*keep your head cool!* It is astonishing what a deal of sickness would be spared to the world,—now, mark me,—if people would but obey one simple and universal precept—to *keep their heads cool, and to keep their feet warm, as I do.*”

Part of the mystery attending Mr. Hervey’s singular costume was now explained; and I remarked, with some coolness, that I believed it to be an excellent precept.

“Then why don’t you get your head shaved? Bless me, young man! I don’t wonder that you are attacked so frequently by fever, when you wear more hair upon your crown than ever did Samson, the Danite. Get your head shaved, boy, forthwith; you will never be well until you do.”

I replied, that he recommended a course, which, however excellent as a remedy, was too great a sacrifice as a preventive; adding, that the thickness of the hair was a sign of physical strength; and that Samson was impotent with his head shaved.

“These things,” replied Mr. Hervey, not allowing his orthodoxy to stand in the way of a favourite theory, “these things are an allegory, boy, which I cannot explain to you just now. If you remember, they put out Samson’s eyes ; but that, when blind, he effected great things. Do you never think that *you* may grow blind ?”

I said that I had never, as yet, weighed the probabilities of any such accident.

“Then the sooner you think about it the better; for you don’t know how soon you may be blind. A great affliction is blindness,—the chances of which it is our duty to provide against. I practise walking in the dark, two or three hours every day,—an excellent practice it is ; I recommend you to adopt it, without delay,—you have never yet tried the experiment ? Bless me ! you are very improvident. Now, should the evil day come upon me,—and I do not think it far off,—I shall, in some measure, be provided, you see ; for many of the functions of life I am able to perform blindfold, and darkness will soon be my natural element. Suppose that you try the effect,”—and he offered to lend me his bandages.

I said, that I was in no apprehension of being smitten with blindness just at present, as my sight was exceedingly good, and I had never had an ophthalmic disorder.

“You don’t know ; you don’t know,” said Mr. Hervey,—“in the midst of light we are in darkness,—allow me to inspect your eye-balls :—‘ah ! I see it,—I see it,—I see it ! I see the advances of the enemy. Young man, be wary and provident.”

“In God’s name, Mr. Hervey”—

“You ought not to swear, young man.”

“May I beseech you, then, sir, to tell me what you see so portentous in my eyes.”

Ellen had by this time run away to tell her mother of my visit, or she would soon have silenced my fears.

“Young man ; you are blind already, wilfully blind to the future,”—and Mr. Hervey would have added more, but at this point (for we were now seated in the drawing-room) his better half entered ; and exclaimed, in a voice which struck terror to his soul,—“What !—still at your nonsense, Mr. Gab.” This elegant monosyllable *Gab* was the diminutive of her husband’s angel-name, which found favour in the sight of Mrs. H——, when it was not her intention to be respectful.

Mrs. Hervey was an excellent person. She had but two deteriorating qualities ;—she hen-pecked her husband, and kept a dog ; but, in all other respects, she was immaculate. She belonged to a noble family, being second cousin to an Earl by the mother’s side, and she had been heard to talk

more than once, in grave tones, about "~~we~~ of the aristocracy." She once had been reckoned a beauty, and was still a very comely matron, tall, fair, and dignified, with the finest set of teeth in the world, and an exceedingly white hand, which she had a peculiar method of displaying. She was a great reader of all sorts of books; and not being at all "slow of speech," she was prone to argument, and ambitious of the reputation of a wit. Quotation was a powerful weapon in the hands of this fair polemic, for she had a highly ingenious manner of distorting the testimonies she adduced, so as to make them applicable to her arguments, in the very teeth of the author who wrote them. In this manner she generally contrived to get the better of poor Mr. Hervey, whenever there was a theological discussion, for she scrupled not to mutilate the Scriptures, whenever it was convenient to do so, to the great scandal of the reverend gentleman, who insisted upon "the unfairness of such proceedings, to say nothing of their great impiety."

"What! still at your nonsense, Mr. Gab?"—such was the good lady's exordium.—"Mr. Jerningham, I am delighted to see you. I must not call you Claude now; or I shall be *clawed* for my familiarity,—he! he! he!—'a wit's a feather,' said Pope, 'it's a feather in any body's cap.'"

I complimented the lady upon her facetiousness.

"Thank you,—thank you, Mr. Jerningham," continued the voluble dame. "You are, as Ben Jonson says, 'the very Jacob's staff of compliment.'"

"Woman," interrupted Mr. Hervey, "it is unseemly in a clergyman's wife to quote excerpts from profane play-writers; more especially when the passage, like that which you have last repeated, contains the blasphemy of a scriptural allusion. The tongue is an unruly member,—a very unruly member, Mrs. H."

"Pish! Mr. H——, you forget yourself.—Why, you put me in mind of Parson Adams, in Fielding's exquisite novel, who reproached Joseph on the score of a quotation:—have the goodness not to interfere another time, if you please, Mr. Gab."—Then, turning her back upon Mr. Hervey, she continued, addressing herself to me, "My husband is superannuated quite. He has gone out of his wits since you saw him. He insists upon it we are all growing blind; and wishes us all to get our heads shaved, not even Ellen excepted, who has the clearest eyes in the world; and hair which, to invade with the scissors, would indeed be a crying shame."

I looked into Ellen's face; and the poor girl was blushing.

“There’s no living in the house with him,—none, I assure you, Mr. Jerningham. He is captain of the ‘Ship of Fools,’—and, as Burton says in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* (have you read Democritus Junior?) ‘he hath strange conceits and idle thoughts; misconstruing, amplifying, and exaggerating every thing he thinks and fears. He is in his ‘lunes’ all day long. He thinks that he is waxing thin, like Pharoah’s lean kine, when, in reality, as you see, Mr. Jerningham, he is more like the fatted calf of the Prodigal.”

“Woman!” cried the Reverend Gabriel, whose zeal for the holy Scriptures never allowed him to be silent on such occasions;—“woman, I have told you already, that it ill becomes you to sport with Holy Writ.”

“And I have told you already to be silent. He is past all bearing, Mr. Claude. He goes about the house, ‘darkling,’ as Milton says, for hours together, for no other reason in the world, but that his father went blind before him. It was but the other day, that he nearly killed poor Absalom—(I don’t see you notice the dog, it is the prettiest little creature, is it not? and so good, Mr. Jerningham,—I call him Absalom on account of his hair) by reason of the ‘total eclipse,’ which he so whimsically imposes upon himself,—and he broke my large china jar, which my cousin, the Earl

of ——, gave me,—he brought it all the way from Dresden, and Mr. Hervey must needs kick it over, in the course of his blind man's vagaries,—and he upset the ornament table, demolishing half my *bijouterie*,—and a world of mischief besides has he done, which I cannot enumerate now. And then he has had his head shaved:—did you ever see such a fright?—‘What a wicked beast he was to disfurnish himself,’ as Shakspeare says, in this manner. And he wraps up his legs, as you see, for all the world like a gouty subject; and all because he has taken up a notion that ‘a cool head, and warm feet,’ are the only preventives against sickness. Then he weighs himself every day, and measures out his food; and takes medicine, which certainly does him no good; though the apothecary persuades him thereto, having his own private motives for so doing. The fact is, that since Mr. H. has given up his clerical duties, his mind, for want of occupation, has gone wool-gathering in the clouds. I may say of him as Doctor Johnson has written of Collins, the poet, that ‘he, who while he *studied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no sooner *lived to study* than his live was assailed by more dreadful calamities, disease, and insanity.’ Is it not so?”

CHAPTER XVI.

We sat,
In dusk ere stars were lit or candles brought.

SHELLEY.

By Heaven, I think 'twill be excellent, and a very
politick achievement of a kiss.

BEN JONSON.

“So you really must leave us to-morrow,” said Ellen Hervey inquiringly, as we sat together upon a couch by the window, enjoying the still twilight, and the presence of one another. It was after dinner, for the Rev. Gabriel declared late hours to be unhealthy, and fixed upon three o'clock as the hour of his principal meal; and Ellen was alone with me; and we sat together, and spake of the past.

It may be, that some of my readers,—the female portion especially,—will feel anxious, at this point of my narrative, to be made acquainted with the external appearance of the author—I will not say the *hero*—of this autobiographical history; for I presume not to be invested with any qualities of a sufficiently exalted nature to arrogate the title of heroism, which is a property as unfortunately rare as it is supereminently excellent.

I had no pretensions to be an Adonis;

For, indeed, nature nor in form nor hue,
Bestowed on me her choicest workmanship.*

But I was decently well-looking; and there was nothing unseemly about me. At the period of my return to England, I had lived about two-and-twenty years upon the surface of this sub-lunary globe. I was five feet eleven in height, which is, by some, thought *the* height for a man; and, having weighed myself, at the instigation of Mr. Hervey, in that gentleman's patent machine, the index-hand, if I remember aright, pointed to eleven stone and some few odd pounds, jockey's weight. My figure was erect and somewhat broader at the shoulders than it was at the waist; it would have been better had it been somewhat stouter; but that is a matter of opinion;

* Shelley's *Julian and Maddalo*.

and "the courteous reader that never saw me,"* must put up with this description, resting assured, that it is a faithful one, though I should not have stood much on its fidelity, had I been able to frame a counterfeit, which would have suited the tastes of all parties, and given satisfaction to the whole reading world.

The features which I "addressed to love's work," were more pleasing than regular. My face showed better in the full than it did when presented in profile; for my facial angle was somewhat acute; and my nose was "a too presuming feature." My complexion was fair, and not unseemly; for, whereas my forehead was white, my cheeks had the advantage of some red; and my lips, which were full and well-shaped, were rosy and of a changeable aspect, so much so, that I shall be pardoned for saying that my mouth was an exceedingly good one, because I am perfectly ready to acknowledge, before I bring this sentence to a close, that it was the only good feature in my face, and therefore I am entitled to speak of it. The teeth, which it honoured by protecting, though perfectly white and polished, were not quite so regular as they might have been, owing to the absence without leave of two *incisores*,

* See Scarron's account of himself.

from the upper row, which has set all the others a straggling ; and in the lower jaw, I have a badly-drilled regiment, which stands all out of line, and cannot be persuaded to dress ; but as my mouth is none of the largest, and I do not open it very wide, my ivories are so little exposed, that I never wished them to be better than they are. My hair, which is now quite grey,—though like his of Chillon, “not with years,”—at the period of which I am writing, was of a light brown colour, thick and glossy, and disposed itself, as old Decker says, into a striking “bush-natural,” and curled without the aid of the crimping-irons. For the rest, my forehead was massive, bespeaking a larger cerebral supply than I am in reality blessed with ; and my eyes, which were rather large, were of a mongrel, undetermined colour, which flattery might call blue, but which truth would incline to call grey, whilst the elliptical portion of this organ, commonly called the “white of the eye,” was intersected with a number of veins, which shewed themselves off too distinctly, especially when the external action of sun, wind, dust, &c., irritated their tender vessels, by charging them with a superfluity of blood. And now, reader, thou hast before thee the true and lively portraiture of Claude Jerningham, esquire, who, accoutred in a rifle-green riding coat, and a pair of white mole-

skin pantaloons, was sitting on the —— day of September, A.D. 18—, in the drawing-room of the rectory at Heathfield, in company with Ellen Hervey, just before the candles were brought, in the enjoyment of the sweetest twilight that ever has filled the heart with hallowed and softened emotions.

We spake of the past,—of our childish days; and, upon such a theme, we were more than eloquent. We spake of joys departed,—of events long buried in the sepulchre of time,—of feelings which once had been, but which now were not, and never would be again. We called up a thousand things for many years wrapped in oblivion, which now we remembered and spake of with the tenderest and most affectionate emotion. Every word that we uttered was a note from our heart's lyre; and there was music in the tones of our voices, because there was harmony in our souls. Our accents were very low, for deep feeling is not otherwise than quiet; and memory stole over us with a soothing power, which was sweet, though laden with sadness; and thoughts, too holy for utterance, vented themselves silently; and their stillness was more eloquent than words.

Then we burst the bonds of silence, and language again came to our relief. We spake of events which had happened since we two had

dwelt asunder. I told of my travels and my loneliness,—my sickness and my struggles with death. I said that in the hour of tribulation, when disease sat by my couch, and pain was my bed-fellow, night and day,—and when there was none to help me,—I had thought of Heathfield and of Ellen, and a light shone upon the darkness of my despair, and peace entered the dwelling-place of my soul. Then Ellen spake of all that had happened at Heathfield since last I had seen her. She told me of her poor brother,—how the boy had been neglected at school, and sent home too late to his parents,—how she had nursed him many weeks, scarcely resting from her vigils, because she loved him very dearly; and the boy liked best to be tendered by Ellen—his “*own* sister Ellen,” as he called her. Then she told me how the boy died,—died in her arms one night, when all beside her slept; and how she was left alone with death, but feared not, because her God was in the chamber. And when Ellen spake of these things she wept. Poor girl! she had seen much of grief; and

Many innocent tears
Witnessed her sorrow, pure as April weeps
Into the bosom of the spring.*

Then another silence ensued; and I passed my

* Shirley's *Duke's Mistress*.

hand athwart my eyes, for they were full and almost over-brimming; and I dashed away the tears, which were gathering there, and, assuming a joyous voice, I said, "Ellen, another little star has risen upon the haven of my memory, and it is one of exceeding brightness. I remember,—it was, I think, in the holiday-time, after my first absence from Heathfield,—that I was sitting in this same room by the fire, for it was the middle of winter, and I had been dining with your father: it was twilight, I remember, just as now, or rather, it would have been darker, had not the bright, cheerful fire, in fitful blazes, lighted up the room and shewn us the countenances of each other. We were sitting over our wine and dessert,—my Uncle Matthew was there; he was deep in divinity with your father: my brother was there too, but he was, as usual, self-involved. *Your* brother was likewise present, and your sister, both busied with their oranges, whilst you, Ellen, were sitting on a footstool, by the chimney-corner, almost at my feet. Oh! how vividly do I recollect this scene; and the grouping of the whole party. I have reason to remember it: you shall hear, and then you will acknowledge that I have. Well, Ellen, you were sitting at my feet, on a little ottoman by the fire; you were silent, and doing nothing but finding out pictures amongst the live-coals, as often

we have found them in the clouds ; when suddenly, like one startled by a magic touch, from your lowly posture you bounded up,—yes, Ellen, you did,—nay, do not interrupt me,—like a startled fawn you rose up, my Ellen, and, throwing your young arms around my neck, you kissed me on the cheek thrice ; and then, unobserved by all but me, you sunk again upon your humble seat, and continued your picture-seeking occupation. Do *you* remember this Ellen ?”

I could not see the blush upon her cheek ; for it was almost dark ; but she answered, in a voice half playful and half reproachful, as though she did not very well know whether she ought to be pleased or offended, “How can you be so silly, Mr. Jerningham ? You know I was a baby then ; and you were only *Master* Claude—quite a little boy, when it happened. ’Twas a childish business altogether ; and, I am sure, not worth mentioning *now*.”

“Oh ! Ellen, it is ! Do you know I have often thought about it. It is well that you should forget it,—you, who conferred the obligation ; but I who received it, Ellen, ’twould be ungrateful if *I* were to forget. You do not know what the memory of those kisses have been to me. You say it was a childish business ; if so, I would be always a child. ’Tis a sad thing, Ellen, to be a man, and to feel,

with a desolating certainty, that ‘the beautiful has vanished, and returns not.’ I remember some sweet poetry, which strikes a responsive chord to those which now vibrate in my soul :

Flowers are lovely ; love is flower-like ;
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
Oh ! the joys, that came down shower-like
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old.*

I wish that I were a poet, Ellen, and I would write such sweet verses to you ; but, I assure you that I am quite a child still ; I have no ambition to be a man. You pleaded childhood as an excuse,—an *excuse*, that’s a palliative word, and Ellen’s conduct asks not palliation ; but you say that I was a boy then ; believe me, I am not altered now I have the same feelings, the same wishes, the same hopes, and the same affections. I am a boy, Ellen, within ; my heart has not yet grown old. In all but these gaunt limbs, I am still the same ‘little boy,’ that erst I was when you kissed me, by the fire-side, in this very same room. As a proof of this, I will act the child, even as you acted it of old,”—and I drew myself close by the side of this shrinking young creature upon the sofa, and, throwing my arm gently round her neck, I inclined

* S. T. Coleridge.

ce towards Ellen's, and thrice I kissed her, in
for the courtesy she had bestowed upon me,
e upon each delicate cheek, and once upon
osy mouth, which was made to kiss and be
l. I had the full enjoyment of manhood in
tle "childish act;" and I said, "Ellen, you
at I am still the same silly little boy." But
did not know what to say.

s time to bring this chapter to a conclusion.
ext morning I was again upon the road.

CHAPTER XVII.

Hypocrisy puts on a holy robe,
But never changes nature.—

FORD.

My brother received me at Oxford with an unexpected degree of cordiality. He welcomed me with every manifestation of sincere and affectionate delight. His kindness was more oppressive to my feelings than ever his hatred had been, because I had not given him credit for any kindly emotions towards me; and, therefore, I felt that I had wronged him.

“My dear Claude,” he said, in a gentle and persuasive voice, “from this time forth let us be not merely brothers in name,—let us ratify a covenant and be friends. Hitherto there has been strife between us: I need not say how heartily I

regret it ; my conscience upbraids me daily for the share I have had in our dissension ; and I confess to you that *I* have been to blame, much, oh ! much more than you, my brother. But suffer the past to be forgotten.—By the Divine Grace, has my heart, which, for many years, has been laden with hatred, malignity, injustice, and a chaos of evil passions, been cleansed of this perilous stuff ; and my evil ways have been sore repented of. Yes, Claude, I have been very wicked ; Satan has been at work in my soul, and for awhile I listened to him, and was cajoled by him ; but I heard a voice saying, ‘Son, why strugglest thou not ?’ Then I rose up and girded my loins, and I took **THE BOOK** into my hand, and I read the comforting words of the Redeemer ; then I laughed Anti-christ to scorn, and I am now as a leper that has been made clean, and the servant of him who cleansed me.”

In one respect, Frederick was unaltered : he was still the same meditative, unsocial being, that he had been in infancy and in boyhood. The same downward look, the same compressed lips, the same lowering forehead, still indicated the gloominess of his soul.—No cheerful accents escaped from him ; no smile relaxed his features ever :—he walked in the shadow of despondency, and no sun ever burst upon his darkness. I learned

from a fellow-scholar of Frederick's, who had erst been at school with us both, that my brother was a severe student,—passing the whole day amongst his books, and seldom resorting to exercise, save just at the close of day, when he would seek the most secluded paths, as though anxious to escape observation. The merry laugh of youth rang not in his apartments; the wine-cup flowed not at his board; companionship had no pleasures for him; he belonged to nobody's set. He was regarded by the college authorities as a youth of the strictest morality: none sought to inquire into his proceedings; for his conduct was beyond suspicion.—In the lecture-room, he was the admiration of the tutors; abroad, the pet example of the proctors; his brother-students, though none dared to molest him, regarded him in the light of an ascetic, who was too proud to mix with his fellows, or too religious to share in their levities; and, therefore, they jeered him behind his back, and voted him a poor creature; but they one and all had the candour to acknowledge that he was a man of surprising talent, from whom great things were expected, though they knew not that he was ambitious of honours.

With regard to his behaviour towards myself, I was delighted by the favourable change which his manner exhibited; but my first impressions were

more joyous than those which I subsequently experienced. Frederick had confessed himself in error, and manifested his desire that we should be friends; but he put it all upon the score of his duty; it was not a spontaneous effusion upon his part, but a moral obligation, which he was unable, consistently with virtue, to reject. Religion, not love, had wrought this change. The almost scriptural language which he had employed to express his feelings upon the occasion of our late enmity,—the pious regret which he acknowledged,—the vehement self-upbraidings of which he spoke, all bearing the impress of a strong religious sense pervading them, suggested to me, that the gloom of my brother was the result of a devotional melancholy, which a sense of his own unworthiness might have awakened in his meditative mind. Frederick, from his childhood upwards, had been of an exceedingly thoughtful disposition;—it was the nature of his mind to concentrate itself upon one all-engrossing object, to admit no external influences to divert it from its single course, to check all propensity to excursions, and to bring all its energies to bear upon the prosecution of one leading design. There was a singular unity in my brother's meditations; he would retreat, snail-like, into the cell of his mind, and shut up the windows of his senses.—He would

sit for hours, self-involved, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, feeling nothing :—he would be all mind, all spirit ; insensible of a material presence, the external world would be as nothing to him, no more than if he were a dreamer.

A mind fashioned as was this, is a dangerous possession to a man. It will make him either an angel or a monster ; and he is happy if he escape being the latter. Thus, with my brother, for many years a fratricidal feeling of hatred had been the leading principle of his life ; this solitary consideration, like the rod of the high-priest Aaron, had swallowed up all its fellows, and suffered none to abide with it. But now a change had passed over his feelings ; a new supremacy was paramount in his bosom ; and, from the tone of Frederick's conversation, I had reason to suppose that religion was now his guiding-star ; the one light by which he was steering fixedly the bark of his existence. Still, perhaps, I might be in error, still the dupe of a delusion ; but the belief which I encouraged was a pleasing one ; it was a charitable one also, and therefore I was averse from rejecting it. Besides, the hypothesis which I had set up, was far from being unsupported. My brother was a creature of all others the most likely to become a religious enthusiast. When I speak of religion, in this instance, it becomes me to explain what I mean. I

speaking not of christian piety ; I speak not of that active benevolence, which, preferring another to itself, in doing good to the creature, exhibits its gratitude to the Creator. I speak not of those feelings which are made up of love, and kindness, and peace, and good-will to all men : in this sense, to have been religious, the fabric of my brother's morality must have been remodeled, and rebuilt entirely ; for it was composed of very opposite materials. But Frederick's disposition was attuned to a certain hard-featured religion, which seeks by austerity of manners, and a rigidly painful morality, to conciliate the favour of the Deity, — a stern, unbending, censorious morality, whose very self-denial is selfish, and which, rejoicing in its own exclusiveness, has no concern for the well-being of others. Such was the religion to whose embraces I deemed that my brother had betaken himself. All physical gratifications he seemed strenuously to contemn ; he was one, who, in a land of superstition, might have been a pattern to those deluded victims, who seek to propitiate the Godhead, by self-inflicted infirmities, and tortures voluntarily imposed. He was singularly constant to his resolutions ; instability was not catalogued amongst his vices ; and had his designs been benevolent, he might have accomplished an infinity of good ; for he was one who departed not

from the determinations he had once formed. But such were Frederick's principles, that though he might become a devotee, it was impossible that he should ever be a Christian.

I acquainted my brother with the purport of my intended travels ; and enquired whether it was in his power to furnish me with any clue that might guide me ; but Frederick either knew nothing, or was unwilling to supply me with any information relating to Everard Sinclair ; and endeavoured to dissuade me from the enterprize, as one pregnant with difficulties, and likely to be crowned with disappointments. He spoke of my poor friend in language which I could scarcely refrain from fiercely and indignantly resenting ; and adduced the warranty of scripture in support of all that he said. He declared that Everard Sinclair was deservedly punished for his infidelity ; he believed that an offended God visited the impiety of his creatures in this world, as well as in the next and reproached me for the part I had undertaken in opposing the behests of the Most High, and daring to interfere where the Lord had stretched out his hand. "The Lord has smitten your friend," said my brother ; "and shalt *thou* go to the rescue ?"

I listened to all this in silence. It is strange that I held my peace ; and I have often wondered

at my forbearance. But so it was, that I retained my equanimity, and replied mildly to my brother. I said that I was sorry he differed from me ; but that it was not my intention thus early to sound a disgraceful retreat. I vindicated the conduct of my friend, in meek and apologetic language ; acknowledging that in some points, his creed was such as I did not countenance ; but claiming at the same time, that a full concession should be made to him, of a truly christian spirit, and declaring that there was not another in the congregation of living men, whose heart was more full of piety, and whose actions were more highly benevolent. But my brother was no convert to my opinions ; he answered that Everard was no Christian ; his doctrines were opposed to Christianity ; and it was not possible that there should be any virtue in a mind from which faith was absent. I did not seek to lengthen the argument ; my reply was of a dubious import, and I contrived to change the tenour of our discourse. But I tarried not long at Oxford ; and, when I turned my back upon the University, I congratulated myself that I had escaped a second rupture with my brother.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Vast as the hill down which he marched, appeared
A young tall squire.

COWLEY.

I rode one evening with Count Maddalo ;

.
So as we rode we talked.

SHELLEY.

THE estates of Everard's brother, were situated in that part of the country which lies between the borders of Oxfordshire and the great western road. The evening, therefore, of the same day upon which I quitted the university, beheld me dining at an inn, not many miles distant from Cloddington, by which euphonious name I shall typify Squire Sinclair's place.

On the following morning, having breakfasted, I rode over to Cloddington, attended by my servant Watson. It was harvest-time, and the country round about was alive with the busy reapers. The weather was remarkably favourable, and the husbandman was cheered by his prospects.

I don't know exactly how it was, but as I cantered along the road, which was skirted by the yellow corn, like the golden sands of the river Pactolus ; and as I heard the blithe voice of the reapers, and looked in their merry faces, men and women cheerfully mingling, and unrestrained by any conventional trammels, I almost desired in my heart that I also had been born a labourer ; yet I had no reason to repine at my lot, for of a certainty I was very happy.

I entered the boundary-gates of Mr. Sinclair's property,—in lovers' language, “upon the wings of hope.” I find, that when I am riding on horse-back, I am always more sanguine than at other times ; exercise is the parent of hope ; it is only when I sit still that I despair. Besides, as I rode along, I discerned an appearance of order and propriety pervading the whole Sinclair estate, which was in the highest degree creditable to its possessor. The disposition of the grounds was tasteful ; the cattle at work on the premises were well fed and in good condition ; the labouring man seemed contented, cheerful, and full of health. As I approached the mansion, I perceived that the gardens were every where arranged with the most scrupulous nicety and decorum ; the walls thickly studded with the ripe and luscious fruit, and the flower-beds gay and varied, gracefully laid out,

and adorned with plants of every description. I had never seen the owner of this property, but I had always encouraged a notion that he was nothing better than a monster, a barbarous rustic tyrant, without one spark of humanity, or one redeeming qualification,—rude, uncivilized, insensate,—rough in his manners, brutal in his behaviour, incondite in his appearance; a savage and unlicked bear-whelp, uninformed by a spark of intellect, and unrefined by a single virtue. Such was the creature that afar off my imagination had pictured Mr. Sinclair; and it must be acknowledged, that the portrait was a monstrous one. We are too apt, in our ignorance, to exaggerate both the personal and moral deformities of those whom we are not acquainted with; and our imaginations draw largely upon our own credulity, when they set up a fancy-portrait of one whom they only know by hearsay. Thus, poor Scarron prefixed to his works a detailed account of his infirmities, describing with a painful minuteness, and a humour which is only too melancholy, the “irregular plan of his person;” because, as he says, “I have been informed that some facetious gentlemen make themselves merry at the expense of an unhappy wretch, and describe me another sort of monster than I really am.”

In this manner, my imaginative ignorance had

pictured the individuality of Mr. Sinclair. I had represented him in my own mind, as one so exceedingly depraved, that it was a wonder the earth supported him ; but I had no sooner passed the boundaries of his estate, than I began to repent of my injustice. I said to myself, "I have wronged this man. The property, which I now see before me, is not that of one utterly depraved. I see the superintending hand which has presided over all this work. The mind of the master-labourer is visible upon this estate. Order, cleanliness, and taste, are not the characteristics of a vitiated mind ; neither would health and cheerfulness sit enthroned upon the face of the working rustic, if he were the servant of a severe task-master. It is evident that I have wronged Mr. Sinclair." And having arrived at this conclusion, which was not very logically deduced, I began to entertain some hopes that success might attend my mission ; I felt elated in consequence, and with a heart full of joyful anticipation, I arrived opposite to Cloddington House.

A servant in a neat livery, — a tall fellow enough, — answered the summons of the door-bell. He informed me that the squire was abroad, somewhere about the estate, — that he was never at home during the morning ; but that he (the footman) would be happy to conduct me to his master, if I would

follow him. I thanked the man, but told him, at the same time, that, if he would point out in what direction I was likely to find Mr. Sinclair, I would spare him the trouble of attending me; and the right road having been indicated, I set out in search of the Squire.

I was not long before I saw in advance of me a person, whom I knew to be Mr. Sinclair, because there was a servant attending him, with a led horse, from which his master had dismounted; and because the individual in question, was giving directions to some labouring men who stood around him. So I despatched my servant before me with a card to announce my advent; and whilst Watson was presenting the card, I busied myself with surveying Mr. Sinclair; the result of which survey, having previously vouched for its accuracy, it is my intention to place before the reader.

Charles Sinclair, Esq. was about three years my senior; or, lest it should happen that my age be forgotten, or that the reader should be an indifferent arithmetician, I will explain that he was just twenty-five; in the full vigour of his years, and a fine specimen of what humanity was, in those times when "there were giants on the earth." I know nothing at all that I can liken him unto, unless it be a Titan in top-boots, or one of the pictures in Gulliver's Travels. He was the most

prodigious mortal that ever has come across my path. If you had met him, some few years ago, you would have taken him for Belzoni, with his face shaved. He was not far from seven feet high, and he was exceedingly well proportioned. He was none of your walking may-poles—your proper-sized men wire-drawn; he moved not about slouching and shuffling,—“dragging his slow length along,” and not knowing what to do with himself, like the tail of a South African sheep. He was a perfect model for a painter ambitious of representing a Hercules, a Prometheus, or any one of those ancient gentry who heaped Pelion on Ossa, and played at quarter-staff with the immortals —

“ With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies ;”

and huge limbs, which were not cumbrous, but full of vigorous elasticity; with a fine, fair open countenance, “large as that of Memphian Sphinx,” and unrelieved by one vestige of a beard; clad in a green short-cut coat; white chord inexpressibles, and tops; he stood there sublime and mighty as one —

“ who would have ta'en
Achilles by the hair, and bent his neck ;*”

* See that grand fragment of *Hyperion*, written by John Keats.

or with the greatest possible facility threat the nine worthies at once. The Æthiopians plenitude of their wisdom, would have chosen unhesitatingly for their king ; it being the of that sapient people, as Herodotus* tells sentence of Greek, which I shall obligingly fer to the margin, lest any one should be i not to read it, to pick out the most strapping in the kingdom, to represent, under the tit monarch, the collective strength of the thereby proving themselves to have been m cellent linguists and etymologists, for the king, in our language, whatever it may hav in their own, according to its primitive m signifieth *stout* or *valiant* ; a sense, which corrupt days, is unfortunately lost sight o gether. In short, he was so big (reader, th have already discovered that I am ambit displaying my learning, which I assure the inconsiderable,) that had he lived in Queen beth's time, he might possibly have been pr to a situation in the household of her virg

* Τὸν ἀν τῶν ἀστῶν κρίνωσί μέγιστόν τε εἶναι καὶ μέγαθος ἔχειν τὴν ἰσχυρὸν τοῦτον ἀξιοῦσι βασιλεύειν - soever of the citizens they should fix upon as being of th stature, and strong in proportion, him they deemed wor a king. *Thalia*, cap. xx.

jesty, which was composed, as Doctor Donne assures me, of

“ Men big enough to throw
Charing Crosse for a barre ;”

a statement which Francis Osborne has confirmed in his *Traditionary Memoires*, saying, that this princess “ did admit none about her for pensioners, privy chamber-men, squires of the body, carvers, cup-bearers, sewers, &c. (that were not a few in number,) but persons of stature, strength, and birth.” Indeed, I question much, whether, had Squire Sinclair been inclined, he might not have got himself appointed to the drum-majorship of a grenadier regiment—an ultimatum which having arrived at, I will not run the risk of an anti-climax, by saying any thing more upon the subject.

Squire Sinclair advanced towards me ; with a remarkably bland expression animating his massive countenance, like sunshine gleaming upon a pyramid.

“ Mr. Jerningham,” he said, extending his hand ; “ you are most welcome to Cloddington Hall. Your appearance, however, astonishes me ; for I heard from one who knows us both, that you had left England about three years ago.”

Though there was nothing of particular import in the words of these few sentences, the tone of

voice in which they were uttered, astonished me more than I can express. The accents, which escaped from this gigantic animal, were gentle, almost to childishness; if the liquid notes of the sky-lark had gushed from an eagle's throat, no greater disproportion would have been. But this was not all; the voice which I now heard kindly addressing me, was so precisely similar in its tones to that of my lost friend, that had I been unconscious of another's presence, I should have deemed that Everard stood beside me. As it was, I started upon my saddle, for I had not as yet had time to dismount; and looking into the speaker's face, I beheld a striking resemblance to the lineaments of my old school-fellow—a likeness, but one upon a larger scale, and deficient in spiritual expression. It was as though the outline of one of Guido's saints had been copied for the design of a giant.

“ Pray don't dismount, Mr. Jerningham. I always have my horse in attendance, and I shall feel pleasure in showing you my place. A fine animal is that, sir, of yours,—what muscle! what symmetry! by Jupiter, I almost think it would carry *me*. Heigh-ho! Mr. Jerningham, 'tis a sad misfortune to weigh eighteen stone; for I find it no easy matter to pick up a beast that I can ride upon. At last, it will come to this, that I must

purchase one of Meux's dray-horses, or content myself with walking on foot."

I remarked that such great strength as his muscular proportions exhibited, must occasionally be valuable to its possessor.

"When you say 'occasionally,' you are right; but the inconveniences resulting from my enormity, weigh heavy in the scale against its advantages. I am not in that sphere of life, which depends for its daily sustenance upon the exertion of physical prowess. But I have no right to be ungrateful; for my health is exceedingly good, and as I am abroad all day in the fields, either superintending my farm, or sporting,—if it be the season,—I am indebted to my muscular frame for bearing up against great fatigues. And it was but a few evenings ago, that I rescued a poor old woman from the assaults of two cowardly fellows, who were brutally ill-treating her, and who had robbed the imbecile creature of all the little money she possessed. I brought them both home with me, and they are now in the county gaol. If a circumstance such as this, Mr. Jerningham, were to happen only once in my life, I ought to bless Providence for having enabled me to resist oppression, and to prosecute justice, albeit to a limited extent."

An involuntary exclamation escaped from my lips,—an exclamation which I would have con-

trolled, but that I had no power to do so. "How like Everard!" I said.

A peculiar expression of blended sadness and displeasure passed across the features of Mr. Sinclair: Presently, he spoke. "I was aware,—for I could not well have been otherwise,—when first I read the inscription upon your card, that I was indebted to your connexion with my brother for the honour of this visit. Mr. Jerningham, this is a painful subject; and I forbore from being the first to touch upon it, because I had not courage to do so; but now that the ice is once broken, it is well, and I shall throw aside reserve. Am I not right in my conjectures relating to the object of your visit?"

My answer was a simple affirmative, and Mr. Sinclair continued. "It is my misfortune to have been for many years entirely misunderstood by my brother. That we are sundered, and do not communicate with one another, is a circumstance much regretted by me, and one which, in the sincerity of my heart, I assure you, was not brought about by any voluntary agency of mine. I never abandoned my brother; he it was, who cast me off. I attach no culpability to him. I believe that for integrity, and benevolence, there lives not his equal in the world; but he lacks discernment, is easily imposed upon, and much led

astray by appearances. It is painful to be obliged, as I am, to 'rake up the offences of one, who, for years, has been beyond the pale of mortality, and whom death ought to exonerate from censure; but I must confess, in justice to Everard, that during the life-time of his father, he was the victim of an unmerited persecution,—of an ill-judged and pernicious severity,—pernicious not merely to Everard, but to my poor mother, (it killed her,) and to myself, for it has rendered me hateful,—I will not say hateful either, for Everard never hated, — but wicked in the eyes of my brother. Mr. Jerningham, you may see clearly, the unfortunately difficult situation in which I was placed by the behaviour of my father. I was a boy, almost uneducated, brought up to look upon bodily strength and activity as the first qualifications of a man,—taught, from my cradle upwards, to despise book-knowledge, and to feel the most thorough contempt for all that was gentle and effeminate; with the example of my father before my eyes, — a father, who, whatever might have been his conduct to others, was uniformly affectionate towards me,—is it strange that I regarded my brother, who was so unlike in all respects to myself, as a poor, weak, pitiful animal, scarcely better than an abortion or an idiot. Mr. Jerningham, I am sure you will feel for me: as a boy, I was tall, robust, and

courageously disposed ; my father loved me for these qualities ; he was kind to me, and I loved him in return. But Everard was his utter aversion, and he taught me, both by precept and example, to despise my unoffending brother. With the result, you are already acquainted, We were all the victims of my father's strange conduct, Everard, my poor mother, and myself. My father died ; and since the day of his funeral, your poor friend has never entered these gates. Where he is, Mr. Jerningham, I know not ; but I am as anxious to discover his residence, as you yourself possibly can be."

" Then you will assist me in the search."

" Undoubtedly ; but we must act with caution. Everard, with all his humility, has a highly independent spirit ; and constancy almost amounting to stubbornness. He is possessed of the most extraordinary patience, and ' conquers his fate by bearing it.' The utmost distress and affliction could never compel him to set aside one principle of action, which he thinks virtuous. If Everard were to be in the agonies of starvation he would not come to me for assistance, because he thinks me a depraved being ; and he never would be beholden to the wicked. My conduct before my father's death was bad enough to warrant his opinion of me : but one of the great delights which

I anticipate in meeting him again, is that of being able to appear an altered man in his eyes. The follies and the bigotry of my boyhood, I am happy to say, have not grown up with me. When my father died, the work of reformation began. I was old enough then to perceive the injustice of my past conduct. I was old enough, also, to perceive the great deficiencies of my education—the uncouthness of my manners—the magisterial tone of my behaviour—in short, the entire absence of every adorning quality, which renders the man superior to the brute. My father had not been dead long before I set about to remedy these evils; but by this time I had lost sight of Everard, and in vain I endeavoured to trace him. I did all that was in my power; I employed my London agent to make an effort to discover his residence, but either through inability, or a want of proper perseverance, he failed, and could procure me no intelligence. Then I went to the metropolis myself, and after the labour of some weeks, I ascertained, by dint of an advertisement, that my brother had lodged with a Mrs. Oliver in —— street, but had quitted her residence some months for a cottage upon the borders of Essex. Then it was that, for the first time, I ascertained the marriage of my brother. To Essex I then proceeded; discovered the house where Everard had lodged, but learned

that he had deserted his quarters suddenly (having paid his rent in advance), very probably scared by the advertisement which I had inserted in the public prints. Having traced my brother thus far, I lost every clue to his discovery. All my future efforts were unsuccessful ; and I ceased from the pursuit in despondency."

I then acquainted Mr. Sinclair with the nature of the correspondence that had passed between his brother and myself ; and the result of my subsequent inquiries ; but no new light having been elicited by this communication, we consulted upon the best means to be adopted in our future investigations.

" I am not anxious," said Mr. Sinclair, " to put myself forward in the pursuit, not from a want of inclination to undergo a small temporary inconvenience, but because I am thoroughly convinced that should Everard be apprized of my intentions, he would exert all his energies to elude me ; and I am of opinion that my presence, should I offer to accompany you upon your travels, would be rather a clog upon your movements, than conducive in any way to your success. My advice is, that you proceed westward, whilst I do all that I can to gain intelligence in the northern counties, and give fresh instructions to my man of business to repeat his inquiries in the metropolis. Wherever my brother

may be, I am almost convinced that he is in distress. He has no resources whatever but those of his own intellect; and his intellect is so little attuned to the tastes and feelings of society, and his conscientious scruples are so coercive, that I fear, great as is his talent, it will be productive of very little profit to him. Besides, he is hampered with a wife, and haply with a young family—appliances which, however delightful to a man in independent circumstances, to one, who can scarcely support himself, are but sorry and painful burthens, which aggravate the afflictions of the sufferer, and render the greatest fortitude bootless. That Everard is not in this neighbourhood—not within an hundred miles of Cloddington, I can take it upon myself to declare, from circumstances with which you are already acquainted. I speak freely to you; I have unburthened myself, Mr. Jerningham, as though you were a long-tried friend, because we have a common interest in the welfare of my poor brother, and are fellow-labourers in the same vineyard. I dare say that you entered these premises preposessed against their proprietor; I trust that you will not depart with that feeling; for I am anxious to sign an amnesty between us. In the meantime, as a matter of course, you dine with me this evening, and I have always a spare room at your service, come to me whenever you will—I have

some good shooting in these grounds ; and it may be that on your way back, you will do me the honour of beating up my coveys. It is unlucky, that just now you happen to be a few weeks too early. Are you much of a shot, Mr. Jerningham ?”

“ A very indifferent one, indeed.”

“ Well, well,” said Mr. Sinclair, laughing, “ you are quite right not to confess it ; a good sportsman will never acknowledge himself to be a successful shot”—and by this time we had arrived at the house.

* * * *

“ Well ! well !” I said to myself, “ for once I have been mistaken about character ; of a certainty, Mr. Charles Sinclair is one of the most sensible men I have ever encountered in my life ; not *very* polished—not *very* intellectual ; but a gentlemanly, well-informed man, with an exceedingly upright judgment, and a fund of good-natured hospitality. This will be a lesson to teach me not to form hasty conclusions.” As I thus soliloquized upbraidingly, I was riding, (on the day after that of my departure from Cloddington) along that part of the King’s high road which stretches from Winterslow Hut to a certain city, named Salisbury. It was my intention to proceed, at once, to Devonshire, a county which, by reason of the cheapness of its

commodities, and the picturesque scenery it exhibited, I looked upon as the most likely one throughout the whole of England, to be selected as a residence for my friend ; besides, I remembered, that when at school, poor Everard had often alluded, in my company, to the strong predilection he entertained for "the sweet shire of Devon," above all other localities in the country ; firstly, because it was his birth-place, and, secondly, because the air was warmer, for Everard did not like the cold, and his wife was in delicate health.

I had not many minutes delivered myself of the soliloquy recorded above, when I heard the trample of horses' hoofs behind me, and, at the same time, sounding in concert, a loud voice, which shouted out merrily, "Hail ! hail ! hail !—Hail to Don Claude ! Signor Jerningham knowest thou me ?" and in a minute the horseman was beside me.

I looked at the familiar intruder, wondering who the devil it could be, for I did not recognize the voice that addressed me ; and, I beheld, to my great astonishment and delight, the good-natured, sunny countenance, looking more handsome than ever, of my old companion and school-fellow, the harum-scarum Lord Leicester.

"Ho ! ho !" he continued, "most gallant of cavaliers, it does my heart good to see you, my old

gentlemen that live in Hindustan,
of the East!"

"By all that is most unacc
came you to know me so so
dressed me from afar off, as if
ticketed on my back larger than t
letters."

"A truly explicit answer! I put
you respond by another. But I wil
mighty mystery which perplexes you
much. Why, how else should I ha
your name, but by sending on my b
to confabulate with your tiger as to t
lord and master? When I learnt th
tronymic was 'Jerningham,' I went an
your fellow myself, and he told me th
one Claude Jerningham, who erst ha
Heathcote

“The lot of all flesh — *sickness*.”

“Sickness? why that’s too good: you, with the constitution of a rhinoceros, that I never knew to be out of repair, — why, damn it, you don’t look like one with the liver-complaint, — not a bit like my uncle, Lord —, who was out there so many years, and now has a face like an egg-plum, remarkable for the longitudinal dimensions, and the bright yellow tints it exhibits.”

I satisfied him of the truth of my assertions, and asked him if he was acquainted with the residence of our old friend, Everard Sinclair, telling his lordship, at the same time, the enterprise upon which I was bound, and the result of my past inquiries.

“Do you know any thing about him?”

“Most chivalrous of mortals! a great deal.”

“But, Leicester,—jocularly apart,—know you the residence of our friend? You put me upon the tenter-hooks of suspense.”

“Then, stay there, most gallant of Quixotes, until it be my pleasure to release thee.”

“‘A most explicit answer, truly;’ I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word; but seriously, my dear Leicester, I will joke to your heart’s content, upon any other subject than this. Here, however, I take exception to your inopportune hilarity. I wish that I could get you to be serious.”

“ And that is the very reason, most impatient of enthusiasts, that I do not intend to be serious.”

“ Bah ! bah ! Leicester,” I replied, petulantly, “ tell me where I can find Sinclair, and then I will laugh incessantly the whole way on to Sarum. Do you know where Everard is residing ?”

“ Troth, do I ! perfectly well.”

“ Where ? where ?—now my good fellow, Leicester—”

“ Not so quick,—not so quick, Don Claude ; I have no sooner answered you one question, than another comes ‘ dogging its heels.’ ”

“ Lord Leicester !” I exclaimed, angrily, for my patience had by this time deserted me, “ if it is the intention of your lordship to make a fool of me, I think that we had better part company. Will you tell me where Sinclair is to be found ?”

“ I am the best-natured man in all England,” replied the young nobleman, most imperturbably, “ and if you are inclined to be angry, I can assure you that I am not ; and if you are disposed to ride off, what’s more, I shall gallop after you ; so you had better put up with my humours, and in the mean time, *take a cigar.*”

“ Upon my word,” I said, accepting the proffered *douceur*, and at the same time striking a light, “ you are the strangest fellow in Christendom ; and I’ll be hanged if I can contrive to quarrel

with you. But have you any particular object in withholding the information I seek ?”

“ Certainly, I have, or I should not do it.”

“ For God’s sake, what is it, then ? Perhaps I may remove the obstacle.”

“ You shall hear, and having heard, you will acknowledge that there is some reason in what I have said.”

“ Proceed.”

“ That’s a devilish fine horse of yours. I don’t care if I buy it of you.”

“ Most provoking of mortals ! what has my horse to do with Sinclair ?”

“ Every thing in the world,” replied Leicester ; “ you are very impatient this evening. That horse of yours, as I was about to observe, is not in the least distressed ; he would carry you twenty miles further before night-fall, if you were inclined to put him to it : would he not ?”

“ I suppose that I must answer your questions ? My beast is a good beast, and I think he might carry me to Blandford.”

“ Precisely so ! now these premises established, I will proceed at once to the marrow of my objection. It is this, that if I were to be persuaded into revealing the place of Sinclair’s residence, you would set off immediately for the spot, as fast as that horse of yours can carry you.”

“ Undoubtedly ! well, what then ? ”

“ Why—I don’t wish you to go ; it is *my* object to detain you.”

“ Look you, Leicester,” I rejoined ; “ I might go far to find a pleasanter travelling companion than yourself ; but, loth as I shall be to part from you so soon, I —— ”

“ No ‘ buts,’ ” interrupted my fellow-traveller ; “ I am not so unreasonable as you suppose. We will enter into a treaty that will accommodate both parties, and if I mistake not, you will accede to my protocols.”

“ Let me hear them.”

“ Promise that for one day you will place yourself at my disposal ; and then I will tell you where Sinclair is to be found. To-morrow devote yourself to my service, and after that, I will give you your freedom.”

“ But acquaint me with the nature of my servitude, and the full extent of the obedience you will exact from me.”

“ Well, then,” rejoined my companion ; “ you must dine with me at Salisbury, this evening. I put up always at Jones’s ; I shall have some friends there to meet you, with whom already I have made an appointment. To-morrow morning you may amuse yourself as you please ; but at night I have a small party by *torch-light* at *Stone-henge*.

You stare ; but it is all arranged. We start from Salisbury at eleven — eleven P.M. precisely, all of us *en cavalier* ; and if we have not a grand carousal at midnight, set me down for an ass ! Do you accede to these proposals ?”

“ With the greatest alacrity in the world. I enter into the spirit of your design. ’Twill be the finest mad-cap exploit that was ever executed or designed. Of how many does your party consist ?”

“ Six beside you,” replied Leicester ; “ I will introduce them all to you this evening — all excellent fellows in their way — *characters* like myself. ’Twould not do to have made it too common.”

“ It will be really magnificent. But now, Leicester, having acceded to *your* terms, it is time that you also capitulate. Where am I to find Sinclair ?”

“ I cannot precisely acquaint you, Jerningham, with the present residence of your friend ; because he *may* have shifted his quarters by this time, and have quitted the spot where last I heard of him. But this much I can tell you, that in the spring, he was living in a village called * * *, which you may have heard of, in South Devon. You say that you are already acquainted with the little adventure I had with Sinclair. He is a noble-

though I could never contrive to
and now let us trot out : that anti
stepper."

END OF VOL. I.



J E R N I N G H A M ;

OR,

THE INCONSISTENT MAN.



Vertical text or markings along the left edge of the page.

JERNINGHAM;

OR,

HE INCONSISTENT MAN.

Man is of dust ; etherial hopes are his,
Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,
Want due consistence.
From this infirmity of mortal kind
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not.

WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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JERNINGHAM.

CHAPTER I.

Inferior passions, and the lighter vanities,
(Of which this age, I fear, is grown too fruitful,)
Yield subjects various enough to move
Plentiful laughter.

RANDOLPH.

RD LEICESTER, for the last few weeks, had been
ding a vagrant sort of life, a circumstance which
ly accounted for his not having answered my
ters. The London season was over, and the young
bleman, whose nature it was to delight in roving
out, had determined upon killing time until the
mmencement of the shooting-season, by beating
the quarters of his friends, and riding about the
untry at random. It happened, that when he
ertook me upon the road, he had been spending

a few days at the house of a gentleman not a hundred miles distant from Andover, and was then upon his way to Salisbury, at which place he had fixed his head-quarters, and having already been visiting in the neighbourhood, he had 'got up' the singular party to which he invited me in the last chapter.

When we reached the hotel at Sarum, Leicester's friends were already awaiting him: they were five in number, and as he had aptly described them, "all characters in their way." If I were to serve them up, after my own stilted caricature manner, I should want half a chapter for each man, a quantity of space which not being able to afford, I must give the reader a few sketches in the rough, though I am aware that I shall not thereby do justice to the discernment of Lord Leicester, who had exerted all his energies to bring together five of the strangest fellows in the county, and had succeeded, as I thought, to admiration.

There was Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, who, in the language of Baker, the Chronicler, was "not dissolute, but very neat—a great visiter of ladies—a great frequenter of plays—a great writer of conceited verses;" he pretended to be a scholar and an amorist, though, under the rose be it said, he was amongst the "twelve apostles" at Oxford, and had popped the question thrice unsuccessfully. But

this was not much for Lord Herbert, because he had written some verses in the "Keepsake," purporting to be "from the Greek," and kept a carriage for an opera-girl, with his own arms blazoned thereupon. Besides, he had a lively fancy, and, like Castilio, in the play, or Mr. Wilson, in the novel,* he would promote a tailor's bill to the rank of a love-letter, upon an emergency, and would carry on a correspondence with himself whenever the occasion was pressing. For the rest, he was six feet high, sported an indifferent *moustache*, and in figure was something like a giraffe, only that he did not carry his head quite so well, and sometimes put his hands in his pockets: he was about thirty years old, and was Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert.

Then there was the Honourable Theophilus Drake, who wore spectacles, and stuttered; he had the best possible things in the world always upon the tip of his tongue, but he never could get them any further; nature had intended him for a wit, but had marred her handy-work at the conclusion, by tying up the articulating member. He was cursed with "Albano's imperfection" more than any man I ever met in my life; but, unlike the majority of stammerers, he was exceedingly good-

* See Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*; and *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*.

tempered, and would join in the laugh against himself with as great zest as any of his neighbours : he had no modesty either, and never sought to conceal his defect, for he was, in truth, a prodigious talker, and he would hammer and sputter till he was red in the face, dying to be delivered of a conceit which was sure to end in a miscarriage, and to be apologized for in a whimsical manner, which compensated, in most cases, for the non-appearance of the original joke ; he was particularly unfortunate in the delivery of his good things, for he would get on pretty smoothly at first, until his anxiety to get well over the crowning conceit of his *jeux-d'esprit* would strangle the incipient birth, and the child, which was so perfect in the womb, would come forth a headless abortion ; the *bon-mot*, or the *double entendre* never would come fairly out, the hinge of his story would not turn, and he was obliged to give it up in despair. This was a sore trial for a man with a head brim-full of wit, but it was borne with exemplary patience by the Honourable Theophilus Drake, of whom I shall say little more than, that he wore a claret-coloured coat, and was something like Oliver Goldsmith.

Then there were two young gentlemen, named Boroughs, both of them M.P.s, for their father was a great Jew broker, and a staunch friend to monopolies. One of this fraternity of legislators

was remarkable for his longitudinal dimensions, the other for the curtness of his proportions, on which account it was the custom to distinguish the elder by the name of the "Long Parliament," and the younger by that of "Short Commons." They were neither of them remarkably celebrated for any very brilliant displays of senatorial eloquence. Boroughs, *senior*, had once moved—*for the repair of a broken window*; and Boroughs, *junior*, since I had the pleasure to meet him, has signalized himself by a short speech in opposition to Mr. Perceval's General Fast Bill, chiefly notorious for a quotation from the *Noctes* of Athenæus, relating to the matter of fish,—a circumstance which brings to my recollection that both individuals of this brotherhood were men, like Cardinal Wolsey, cursed with "an unbounded stomach." But the elder, though he did no great justice to the multiplicity of viands he devoured, being somewhat of the leanest order, was a thorough-paced, honest *bon-vivant*, who was not other in words than in deeds; whilst the younger professedly "never ate any thing," though in the quietest manner imaginable he would empty the dish before him, whilst delivering a lecture on abstinence, and quoting Plutarch, *περι της Σαρκοφαγίας*. In their persons they were what I have described them; and, as I don't remember precisely their costumes, I will not

forfeit the character of an accurate historian, by describing them otherwise than they were, a fault which I might probably be guilty of, were I to attempt any further description.

The last of this notable quinquum-viri was Sir Charles Poroon, *Bart.*, who was the ugliest man and the best rider I have ever come across in my life. But the most prominent feature of his morality was an exquisite aptness of invention; for I should be loth to use any harder expression when speaking of so dignified a personage. The liveliness of his imagination was such, that it often led him into the gardens of fiction; a circumstance not to be regretted, had he abstained from investing his phantasies with the illegitimate title of truth,—a misapplication upon his part, which entailed upon him, I am sorry to say, the epithet of an infernal liar; a distinction which, not being ambitious of having retorted upon myself, I do not allude to upon my own responsibility; for, in my private opinion, Sir Charles was a very agreeable companion, and would have been still more so, had he changed his boots before dinner and talked a little less about horses: but we all have our mad subjects, and the reader is already acquainted with mine.

Such was the *junto* of eccentrics which Leicester had invited me to meet. Such, at least, were the

most prominent features which individualized their different characters; for in many points their natures were identical, and there was a great unity of feeling pervading them. But the grand associating link, which bound all these choice spirits together, was a common love of frolic and conviviality—an universal partiality for the bottle. Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert declared it classical to drink, and quoted from the *Bakchai* of Euripides; Mr. Drake, upon the authority of Lord Bacon, declared that wine was a solvent of speech. Boroughs, *senior*, swore, d—n him, he liked the bottle as well as any man living, and was not ashamed to own it; whilst Boroughs, *junior*, was recommended by his physician to have recourse to “a generous diet,”—and Sir Charles affirmed, upon his oath, that he had never been tipsy in his life, though he had dined with the Lord Chancellor, and drank thirteen bottles at a sitting.

It was agreed that we were to assemble *à cheval*, having previously despatched our servants, at eleven o'clock P.M. precisely, upon a spot in the outskirts of Salisbury, which, I know not for what reason, is known by the name of the *Iron Foundry*. Lord Leicester, who provided the feast, had sent a dog-cart in the morning, laden with edibles of every description, and a suitable supply of torches to the place of rendezvous, which, as the

reader is already acquainted, had been fixed at Stonehenge. The wine, which was of the best quality, and the produce of his lordship's own cellar, had been for several days recovering from the fatigues of its journey, at the King's Arms, Amesbury, with Leicester's seal upon every hamper to guard against any substitution. It was settled that we were to ride across country, which, as the country was Salisbury Plain, there was no difficulty in doing; but mad as we all were, we did not contemplate a return, but had ordered beds to be provided for us at Amesbury, with red herrings and soda-water for breakfast on the following morning.

The day and hour of meeting had been astronomically determined on; for our arrangements had been so ordered, that whereas our journey might be performed by moonlight, the earth would be enveloped in darkness by the time that we had reached our destination. The Lady Cynthia was courtesying down the heavens, and was not an hour's march from the horizon when we assembled, or had agreed to assemble, for a general and simultaneous start.

We drew up our horses in line, reining in the impetuous animals who were as tired of waiting a ourselves; and when the word "off" was given, we started so exactly together, that a blanket might

have covered us all. We went off at a moderate pace, each man with a cigar in his mouth, and every one of us, as may easily be supposed, in reasonably high spirits. With the exception of *Boroughs senior*, who was somewhat awkward in his saddle, we were all of us adroit horsemen; and a clear bright moon shining upon an open country, there was little danger, after all, in this nocturnal equitation.

We started, as I have said, quietly, and continued at a gentle pace, until we had got well past Old Sarum, when we clapped spurs to our animals, and "the devil take the hindmost" was the cry. Up hill and down hill, through fields of standing corn and stubble, knocking over sheaves, outraging the farmer, frightening the cattle, and clearing hurdles, which, in that part of the country, are almost the only enclosures, we galloped onwards at a slashing pace, each man thinking of himself, and never turning to look at his neighbours. The barking of a few shepherd-dogs, and the hallooing of a startled swine-herd or two, were the only sounds that burst upon my ear; for Salisbury Plain, as every body knows, is not a very populous district. I knew the ground tolerably well, and made what I thought a direct course, without any regard to my companions. I took the bearings of Stonehenge, and made for it as straight

as I could go ; my only concern being to get there as quickly as I could. My horse seemed to sympathize with my desires, and pulled at the rein famously, so I gave the animal his head, and assuredly he did his duty nobly, outstripping the winds in speed, and making the earth fly behind him. On the summit of a steep hill I drew up to look after my friends, and I found that Sir Charles Poroon was not many lengths behind, but I was certain that no one was *before*, me.

“ By jingo ! ” cried the baronet, somewhat out of breath, “ I did not expect to be beaten in this manner. If the devil had sat behind you, you could not have kept a better pace.”

“ Where are Leicester and the rest, Sir Charles ? I fancy that we must be first.”

“ *First!*—why the rest are *nowhere!* Let’s push on, and crack a bottle before they come.”

“ No, no, Sir Charles ; let us give them a hail, and if they be within calling, I have got a tolerable pair of lungs, and I dare say that they will make for us.” Whereupon I bellowed so noisily that, if every body had not been asleep, I might have been heard distinctly at Exeter !

The shout was answered, but whether by an echo or by one of our distanced companions I could not satisfactorily determine.

“Bravo!” cried Sir Charles. “Here comes a party of them at all events,—two, three, four. How many ought there to be?”

“Five.—Halloo, Leicester! come in with the tail! How is this, my boy?—‘Distanced!’” we both shouted at once.

“I’m d—d if I know!” said Leicester; “but we are not all here now.” And he proceeded to call over our names.

We all answered the roll-call but Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, who was found to be absent from the assembly.

“I’ll bet any man a dozen of champagne, that Mount-Herbert has been spilt!” cried the baronet. “Have you seen any thing of his horse?”

“No takers, Poroon!” said Lord Leicester; “but we cannot wait here all night, for it’s getting cursedly dark, and we shan’t be at Stonehenge by twelve. Now for it, gentlemen! Steady! steady!” And we started again in company.

We had not proceeded far when Leicester cried out, “I see them! On, my brave fellows, on!”

“See them!—what do you see?” we all inquired at once.

“*The torches!* Look a-head, boys! and make for those lights. Now for it! They cannot be two miles off!” And we looked and beheld in

advance of us, several bright red lights, moving from one place to another. The moon was at this moment smiling a farewell to the earth.

* * * *

It was precisely the hour of midnight, when Lord Leicester arrived at Stonehenge, the fulness of which time was to have been announced by the serial ascent of twelve fiery projectiles, commonly called *rockets*; but that, by some mischance, they had all been left behind at Amesbury. The lady-moon, having already vouchsafed to smile upon this half of the globe, had departed to irradiate our antipodes; and the stars did their very utmost to exert their vicarious energies, but with no more success than the chorus of an opera, however numerous the voices composing it, endeavours to compensate for the absence of a divinely-breathing, and gorgeous Prima Donna. The nocturnal atmosphere was unusually mild, for it was the middle of the month of August; and the artificial light, which we had provided in the shape of multitudinous torches, rendered the darkness advantageous to our purpose, inasmuch as it enhanced the sublimity of the scene. The effect, I can assure the reader, was most exceedingly striking, but if he has never visited, corporeally, the celebrated spot to which I am conducting his imagination, I am afraid that I shall be able to furnish

him with a very inadequate idea of the place, unless he can fancy that a party of monstrous giants had been amusing themselves upon Salisbury Plain, with the diversion of a game of skittles, and having been interrupted in the middle of the sport, had left one-half of the pins standing erect, whilst the other half lay prostrate on the ground. The reader, who has been at Stonehenge, will see at once the imperfections of this simile; but as it is not intended for him, I beg that he will not interfere; this description being expressly for the information of such as have never extended their travels to so distant a part of the empire. But to those who have visited the spot, and yet who know nothing about it, than that they have seen a great many big stones, and have wondered how the devil they got there, I shall say nothing in my own person, but refer them to the elaborate work of the ingenious Inigo Jones, entitled *Stonehenge Restored*; or, to another very admirable treatise, called *Chorea Gigantum*, written by a celebrated antiquary, whose name I do not know.

The bright red light of a dozen torches glared blazingly upon the giant column of mysterious Stonehenge, making a flaming circle in the midst of a black expanse, which, at the distance of many miles, might have been seen and pondered on superstitiously by the astonished and frightened

gazer; for surely such a spectacle had never been beheld within the memory of the oldest man. There, in the midst of the huge pillars, which surrounded us, some rearing their heads erectly, some stretching their vast lengths, on the sod "in most admired disorder,"—upon a little clear space of ground, where nothing marred the level of the turf, a milk-white damask cloth was spread most daintily out, looking, for all the world, like a little oasis of snow, which had fallen on that particular spot, or, to use a more dignified simile, like a small patch of silvery hair upon the head of some virgin of forty, which very ungenerously reminds her that she is not so young as she has been, and hints the propriety of a cap. Upon the surface of this lily-white cloth, for we did not mar the grandeur of the scene by aught so mechanical as a table, were set forth in seemly array, the multi-form apparatus of a banquet, amongst which conspicuously shone forth seven glittering silver chalices, which had been introduced at the special request of Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, who declared them to be more classical than those modern inventions, called wine-glasses,—a request which was immediately seconded by Mr. Boroughs *senior*, M.P. "D—n him, because they held more, and what better reason could be given?"

The repast, for the discussion of which we had assembled at such a romantic spot, was exquisitely varied and recondite, consisting of a great number of delicacies, which I do not just now remember, and presenting a most unique bill of fare, which I am sorry that I have not the power of detailing; but each one of my multitudinous readers, if he entertain, as I have no doubt he does, a preference for any particular dish, may make himself certain that it was there, which is the best account I can give of the feast, because it is sure to be to the taste of all parties.

* * * *

Then we fell upon the savory viands with a prodigious and appalling voracity. One would have thought, by the way we ate, that we had just escaped from a jury-room.

"Some of this cold grouse, Drake?" said Leicester, uplifting the bird upon a fork; "they have not been long enough in season to make them otherwise than acceptable."

"One of Plato's men," observed Mr. Boroughs *junior*, with his mouthful, "a two-footed animal without feathers."

"'Tis a pity Lord Herbert is not here," I said, "to give us the original anecdote out of Diogenes Laertius."

"Seriously speaking, though, Jerningham,"

said our noble host with a sigh, "I am very much concerned for the safety of his classical and amorous Lordship. I hope, from the bottom of my heart, that he has met with no accident on the way."

"Take my word for it, Leicester," grunted Sir Charles Poroon, "that he will be here in good time for his supper, or, at all events, to give us a song. Boroughs, you are uncommonly taciturn! a glass of this white hermitage?"

"I have something better to do than to talk," returned Mr. Boroughs *senior*, enforcing his reply with an oath. "I shall be happy to drink with you, though, so hand me the cold punch; I abominate that rot-gut stuff which you call white hermitage, Sir Charles. 'Tis only fit to be drunk with soda-water of a morning, when you've been cursedly drunk over-night."

"For my part," said the younger Boroughs, tossing off a bumper of port, "I stick to the full-bodied drink, because it agrees with me best, and I never take wine but as medicine."

"Hear! hear," cried Leicester, rapping his plate as he spoke; "hear, hear!" we all shouted together.

"*Here*, indeed," stuttered Theophilus Drake;—"here comes Mount-Herbert, belying his own name, for by Jupiter, he is *dis-mounted*, and is no longer

legitimately entitled to the elegant little prefix, which he glories in."

I will not take upon me positively to state that the honourable gentleman *said* this; I can only answer for what he *would have* done, had the action of his glottis allowed him.

"Salve, serenissime mi Domine!" vociferated Lord Leicester, as his long-absent guest advanced, threading his way slowly through the many columns of our temple, and ever and anon bumping against a stone which the devious light of our torches, obscured by some interposing object, did not sufficiently illuminate.

"Five to two," shouted Sir Charles Poroon, "that Mount-Herbert will greet us with a quotation."

"Pooh!" stammered the Honourable Mr. Drake; "I'll double the odds, and be—be—be—bet——"

"Make haste, Drake!" said the baronet; "you have no time to lose."

But the more Mr. Drake exerted himself, the more unavailing were his efforts, which was certainly very mortifying; for, before he had given up the attempt, he found, to his very great annoyance, that, had he not "hung fire," he would have certainly brought down his bird; for, whilst he was still sputtering, Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert bellowed out:

“Ἦκω νεκρῶν κευθμῶνα καὶ σκότου πύλας
λιπῶν,*—

My dear Leicester, thank God that I am safe !”

“ Hang it ! I should have won the bet,” glibly articulated Drake ; “ I wanted to offer five to one that the quotation was from a Greek play.”

“ Translate ! translate !” shouted the two Boroughs, just as though they had been calling for “ Order !”

“ What on earth have you got in your hand, Mount-Herbert ?” inquired our noble host.

“ Only *my saddle*,” replied Lord Herbert, in a very lugubrious voice.

“ *Your saddle !*” we all exclaimed at once ; “ and where the devil is your horse ?”

“ That is a question, my friends, more easily put than answered. *Facilis est interrogatio, difficilis autem responsio.*”

“ D—n the Latin !” cried Lord Leicester, “ sit down and take a glass of champagne, from one of your own *chalices*, and then tell us all about it.”

“ *Infandum, Leicestere, jubes renovare dolorem*,” began Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, with a quotation that was quite irresistible ; “ I am most infernally jolted, and I have lost the best horse in my stable. Coming down hill, about three miles from this, at a swinging pace, ὦ ταλας ἐγὼ—φευ, φευ, φευ !”

* See the Hecuba of Euripides.

“You were spilt!” interrupted the baronet, who never neglected an opportunity of girding at another’s bad horsemanship, because he was secure from retaliation upon that score;—“you were spilt, and your horse has stole away.”

“*Ecce signum!*” replied Lord Herbert; “I certainly was spilt; but I alighted upon mother earth, with this saddle between my legs. Indeed, if it had not been for the bursting of my girths, Sir Charles, I should have distanced you every one; to a dead certainty, I should.”

“Undoubtedly you would,” I remarked drily; “shall I send you some of this Perigord pie?”

“Allow me to recommend you this ham,” said our host; “it was boiled, I assure you, in Chambertin.”

* * * *

The party was getting uproarious, and Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert was on his legs. “We call upon our noble president to favour the company with a song.”

“Hear, hear, hear!” shouted our two senators in unison.

The proposal was greeted with acclamations; and Lord Leicester, whose musical powers I have before had occasion to celebrate, roared out the following verses of an

EPICUREAN SONG.

Let snarling Cynics rail at it, and priests say what they will,
A bright and joyous world is this ; and I will love it still.
A thousand glorious things there are which make this earth divine ;
But high above them all in worth is the juice of the great vine.

There's a blessing in the sun-light, a blessing in the air,
And blessings, on Dame Nature's face, which laugh out every
where,
But none to equal those which swim in the depths of a deep bow
For none, like them, can raise from earth the lazy-pacing soul.

I sit within my bower, and enjoy the cooling breeze,
Which plays upon my forehead through the rain-besprinkle
trees ;
While the perfumes of a thousand flowers from the scented ear
rise up,
But what in sweetness can excel the aroma of the cup ?

A maiden sits beside me as I quaff the glowing wine,
And she presses with a gentle touch her blissful cheek to mine ;
But the roses though they mantle on that softly-swelling cheek,
When they blush beside the rosy wine, are lustreless and weak.

I sip the sparkling nectar, and it mounts up to my brain ;
I feel the presence of a God in each distending vein.
A holy rapture seizes me, an ecstasy divine ;
And is there not a Deity for ever in the Wine ?

The earth it reels, it totters ; and the trees dance to and fro ;
The mountains shake their hoary heads and wave their caps
snow ;
The far-off city staggers with a strangely-trembling motion,
And the gentle sky bends down to kiss her wild lover, the Ocean

The Sun itself whirls round and round, and now 'tis overcast ;
And darkness overspreads the day as though it were the last.
There is a torrent in my brain,—a film across mine eye,—
Oh! Father Bacchus, help me, for I fall, I faint, I die!

The voice of the singer died away in a cadence which beautifully accorded with the import of the words that it expressed ; and when we had caught the last faint quaver of those exquisitely modulated tones, we burst out in a unanimous manifestation of rapturous delight and thanksgiving. There was a peculiar effect of sound produced by the disposition of the huge pillars surrounding us,—an extraordinary repercussion, which materially assisted the effectiveness of the voice ; but which, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the science of acoustics, to describe.

We all agreed in admiring the song ; but Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, and the elder Mr. Boroughs, were loudest in their expressions of admiration.

“ I enjoyed it much,” said the former, “ there is a fine classical vein pervading the whole piece, and that verse about the maiden, by Apollo, was perfectly exquisite.”

“ I'm d—d if it isn't excellent,” cried the latter, “ there's no humbug in such a song ; just my way of thinking throughout. The fellow who is ashamed of being drunk ought to be condemned

to eternal sobriety. A curse on all skulkers, say I. Mr. Jerningham, you are a sad bottle-stopper: have the goodness to pass me the port."

"Nunc est bibendum," absolutely roared Lord Herbert; for this noble pedant, in common with the rest of the party, was a little elevated by what he had drank.

"Upon my word, Mount-Herbert," cried Sir Charles Poroon, very coolly, "you are the most prodigious pedant I have ever come athwart in my life; and you have no reason to be proud of your scholarship, for you were nothing greater at Oxford than one of the 'twelve apostles.'"

If the baronet had not been drunk he would not have said this, for he was a kind-hearted fellow in the main, and this was the cruellest *inuendo* that Satan ever suggested in his life. The blood of the apostolic patrician absolutely boiled in his veins. He flew into an enormous passion, of which history does not furnish a parallel, and which I can liken to nothing in the world but the late hurricane at Barbadoes. His first impulse was to start upon his legs and discharge a bottle at the head of the baronet, but prudence whispered to him that 'twould be better to refrain, because Sir Charles was an admirable shot, and by reason of his diminutive stature, a very indifferent mark. His next thought was to deny the charge: but as

he could not very well do this without a violation of the truth, which no man of honour could commit, he determined upon retorting the accusation, and proving himself at least as wise as his opponent—a determination indicative of great sagacity, which I cannot sufficiently commend.

“Herc’le! Sir Charles,” cried the indignant scholar, “I know not what you mean by the ‘twelve apostles,’ but if you impute to me any college offences, it were well that you should look to yourself, for you, if I mistake not, at Cambridge, were one of the ‘elegant extracts.’”

“I am perfectly well aware of that,” said the baronet, enhancing, by his own coolness, the extreme wrath of his adversary; “I am perfectly well aware of that, Mount-Herbert, and I am not ashamed to own it.”

Sir Charles must have been proud of the distinction; for he would not have hesitated for a moment to swear that he was “senior wrangler,” if it had suited his convenience to do so.

“That’s right, Sir Charles. D—n it!” vociferated the elder Mr. Boroughs, “I like to see a fellow acknowledge his delinquencies; and speak truth like a man. We can’t be every thing in the world; and what should you want with scholarship, when you have got such a seat upon a horse?”

But Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert was most exceedingly irate, and the interposition of Mr. Boroughs only served to aggravate his choler; so that I know not what scene of confusion might not very probably have ensued, if Leicester had forgotten to interfere, which, fortunately enough, he did not.

“No sparring there, my friends,” cried the young nobleman, “we have something better to do than that. Mount-Herbert, I am entitled, I believe, to call upon you for a song.”

“Hear! hear!” bawled the two senators.

Now, Lord Herbert was remarkably fond of singing his own songs; and if there was one effectual method in the world of pacifying his lordship’s fury, Leicester had assuredly hit upon it. The noble pedant’s tempest of wrath was instantaneously tranquillized by this request; and taking a MS. from his pocket, he informed us, that what he was about to sing, was a paraphrase from a chorus in the *Βακχαι* of Euripides, commencing,

“Ἴτε, θεοὶ Λύσσης κύνες, ἰτ’
εἰς οὖρος.”

A piece of information, which, but for this announcement, I could not have laid before the reader; for, in the original manuscript, I find so little congruity between the Greek version and the English, that I should certainly have given his Lordship credit for the invention of an original poem.

THE MÆNAD'S SONG.

BY LORD HERBERT MOUNT-HERBERT.

I.

Come away, come away !

To the mountain, sister mine ;
Where the maiden-garments rustle,
And the frantic Mænada bustle ;
Where the shout is upward sent,
Full of maddest merriment—
Come away !

II.

Where the Theban maid is singing,
And a thousand laughs are ringing,
Making all the forest tremble,
Where the bacchanals assemble,
Screaming, bellowing, hooting, shouting,
Like a band of Furies routing.
Come away !

III.

Sister, sister,—you are shaking,
And your heart with fear is quaking :
Why dost tremble ?—Look you, there,
See Agave, with her hair
Streaming out, and in her hand
Mark the tendril-cinctured wand.
Stay, oh ! stay.

IV.

Bacchus ! how her eyes are starting,
Like a gorgon's fury-darting !

Sees she aught?—Oh! who is he,
 Clinging to that cedar-tree?—
 Mark the mighty crowd in motion,
 Waving like a troubled ocean.
 Stay, oh! stay.

V.

Who is he, that dares intrude,
 'Mongst this sacred multitude?
 Who is he?—No mother's son;
 But some hell-begotten one,
 A thing of hate,—a thing of scorn,—
 Ha!—'Tis Agave's eldest-born!—
 Stay, oh! stay.

VI.

Let the wine of wrath be poured
 On his head; and let the sword
 Of unswerving vengeance smite him;
 All the pests of Orcus blight him!
 A fire-girt bull, and a slow-tooth'd lion
 Shall feed on the lawless son of Echion
 Night and day.

VII.

See; they huddle round the spy,
 Smiting him; how fearfully
 Glares each eye-ball,—he will rue it,
 For they laugh out whilst they do it
 And a Mænad is most frantic,
 When her gestures are so antic;
 Come away!

VIII.

Hark, to that voice of thunder!—
They have torn his limbs asunder,
And are hurling them about,
With a joyous laugh and a merry shout;
Mad with slaughter, and mad with wine:
Every face incarnadine;
Woe!—woe!—how wisely was he
Named Pentheus, the child of misery.

The night, or, more correctly speaking, the morning, was growing old. Bacchus had effected a lodgment in the brains of his devoted subjects, and was loudly proclaiming his sovereignty in every possible description of uproar. There were more talkers than listeners in the party, and we were all magniloquent together, striking up a kind of Dutch concert, of which it would be difficult to furnish the reader with any very adequate idea. Leicester and myself were the soberest of the lot, though our sobriety was questionable; for in any other company than in the present, we should have been looked upon as confoundedly drunk. The two parliamentary gentlemen were attacking a “second supper,” which doubtless they enjoyed very much, though their visions were not sufficiently accurate to distinguish salt from sugar, and they both of them had got on their plates the

strangest medley of viands in the world. The Honourable Theophilus Drake was more full of anecdote than ever, being perfectly contented with beginning his narratives, and rarely accomplishing any more. The elder Mr. Boroughs, between his mouthfuls, was amusing himself with a fling at the stutterer, declaring that Mr. Drake's witticisms were like Joanna Southcote's conception, a prodigious deal of initiatory fuss, which, after all, ended in air,—the pregnancy of that gentleman's wit being nothing but a huge inflation. To which Mr. Drake replied, by likening the eloquence of his opponent to Dick Turpin's mare, Bess, "rattling on twenty miles an hour with a great lump of meat at her mouth,"—a retort which silenced the senator for very nearly three minutes, during which time he sedulously employed himself upon the carcass of a cold chicken.

Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert was seized with an oratorical madness, jabbering more Bedlamite Greek than ever did Orestes himself, and singing, at short intervals, snatches of unintelligible balderdash, which he declared to be an ode of Anacreon, but which might, with equal show of truth, have been described as a lyric poem by Hafiz, or one of the Psalms of David, chaunted in the original Hebrew. Sir Charles Poroon, who sat beside the

poet, was endeavouring to divert his attention with an account of a miraculous steeple-chace, but finding that such an attempt was a very unprofitable expenditure of breath, he bawled out—"Curse upon your Greek: Mount-Herbert, listen to me!—What did you value that beast of yours at, which played you such a trick to-day?"

But either the Baronet did not speak, or his Lordship did not hear, very plainly, for the noble classic replied, "I call him Euripides, Sir Charles—a good name, (aye?) for a nag. Euripides, quasi, *Euri pedes*,—the feet of the east wind. I called him by that name, Poroon, because he outstrips the wind—*celeri velocior Euro*—and now I call upon you for a song."

Thus solicited, Sir Charles struck up, in a voice more rugged than a Norwegian pilot's,

"There are wonderful things on the earth, boys,
There are wonderful things on the earth."

"Euge! euge!" roared Lord Herbert, interrupting the uproarious singer, "An adaptation from the Greek, as I live, from the 'Antigone' of Sophocles:"

Πολλὰ τὰ δεινα, κ' οὐδὲν ἀν-
θρώπου δεινότερον πέλει..

"There are wondrous things in the earth's wide span,
But nought more wonderful than man."

“That’s not it at all,” cried Sir Charles.

Ουδεν δε του—του—του—

“Ιππος is the Latin word for a horse—ουδεν δε του ιππδου—curse it, that long word sticks in my throat,—confound your apostolic pedantry!—Silence, gentlemen, I’ll begin again.”

“Σίγα, σίγα. καὶ δὴ μεθύων
Ἀχαριν κέλαδον μουσιζόμενος.*

Silence, gentlemen—σιγατε νυν—for Sir Charles Poroon, Baronet, is about to strike up again.”—Thus, after his own manner, Lord Herbert enforced taciturnity. We controlled for a short space of time, the rebellious exuberance of our fancies, whilst the Baronet favoured us with an excellent song, of which I unfortunately happen to remember only the first verse, which is, however, as grand a fragment as any of the Elgin marbles.

There are wonderful things on the earth, boys,
There are wonderful things on the earth,
But amongst the thousands of living things

* This couplet is from the “Cyclops” of Euripides, and is the only happy quotation Lord Herbert ever made in his life. Perhaps it may be thus rendered into English:—

“Silence! whilst the drunken fellow,
His discordant strain does bellow.”

To which nature has given birth,
There is none which can compared be,
My lightning-footed steed, with thee.

Heigho !

It was very nearly four o'clock, and our torches were well-nigh expended, when we determined to make a start for Amesbury, having first of all amused ourselves with an exhibition of fire-works, which we had intended to act as the prologue, but were forced, by conflicting circumstances, to employ as the epilogue of our orgies. Our horses were ready on the ground to convey us on their backs to the inn, but as Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert had no horse to ride upon, and as Mr. Boroughs, the elder, declared that it was "so uncommonly cold, that for his part he preferred walking," and as Mr. Theophilus Drake acknowledged himself to be so tipsy that he could not sit a horse with propriety, our forces were as equally divided into bodies of infantry and cavalry as an odd number very well could be. We were all reasonably drunk, and the dissolution of our nocturnal assembly was the most tumultuous that ever was imagined. We bellowed—we shouted—we shrieked, all vying with one another to send forth the most cacophonous yells, and the Honourable Theophilus Drake indisputably bearing the palm. Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert voted for a

Grecian torch-race, protesting that he was a crack λαμπαδηφορος, and giving us a specimen of his art, by hurling a flaming fire-brand at the head of Sir Charles Poroon, whilst he quietly informed the Baronet that Plato had compared a torch-race to the successive generations of mankind, and Lucretius, with equal justice, to the vicissitudes of human life.

It was not, by any means, a bad idea of Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert's. His proposal was greeted with acclamations, and the whole party, to a man, immediately laid hands upon a torch,—a proceeding which his lordship declaimed against, swearing that it was highly irregular. But we were not, at that time of night, disposed to adopt any system, whoever might be the proposer, in our vagaries. Horse and foot, with a tremendous shout, rushed down the hill at full speed, looking like the Centaurs and Lapithæ, each one with a flaming wand, which he brandished aloft vauntingly, with the gestures of an infuriated Bedlamite. I know nothing to which I can compare our descent, but that of the Gadarene swine, when the legion of devils entered into them; or the progress of the Witch chorus, in *Faust*:—

Thronging, dashing, raging, rustling,
Whispering, babbling, hissing, bustling.

Indeed, it was a tremendous exode. If we had all of us just escaped from a mad-house, we could not have been more frantic. Sir Charles Poroon led the way, thinking that the fewer torches in advance of him the better for the tranquillity of his horse. Leicester, the younger Boroughs, and myself followed very nearly abreast; and the three pedestrians in the rear were exerting all their energies to keep pace with us. Our animals, scared by the moving lights, manifested every symptom of restlessness; they plunged, they reared, they struck out behind, they whirled round furiously, endeavouring with their utmost power to disengage themselves from their riders; whilst the yelling and screaming of the party infuriated them almost to madness. But we had not the slightest fear;—we were past all that sort of thing, and sat upon the animals' backs fixedly as King Charles, at Charing Cross. “Away, away!” shouted Lord Leicester;—

“We would ride on the winds if they were not so slow,
For we have a long, long way to go.”

And, at the same time, putting spurs to his horse, he galloped on to overtake the Baronet. “Hold hard, and be d—d to you;” shrieked Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, “I can’t go that pace at all.—Look out, look out, φυλαττου;” and with all the

...estimation, at
near my head, it alighted u
my horse, who was exaspera
that in a minute I had lost :
and it is the greatest mercy in
living to relate this.

CHAPTER II.

He was a father to the fatherlesse,
To widows he supplied an husband's care ;
Nor would he heap up woe to their distresse,
Or by a guardian's name their state impair ;
But rescue them from strong oppressor's might :
Nor doth he weigh the great man's heavie spight,
Who fears the highest Judge, needs fear no mortall wight ;
PHINEAS FLETCHER.

THE village of * * *, in South Devon, pointed out to me by Lord Leicester, as having been the residence of Everard Sinclair, was situated, as Scarron would have said, "on this side the Ganges, and not very far off from" Exeter; but whether upon the banks of the Exe or those of the river Teign, it is not my intention to divulge, fearful lest too minute an account of its locality might set the said village

in a ferment, as I am about to speak of its inhabitants, and meddle slightly with parish affairs. It was a pretty little place enough, and I shall distinguish it by the title of Eatonfield, a name which I have just found in "Cary's Itinerary," and which, legitimately belonging to a place in the neighbourhood of Manchester, may, without danger, be applied to a village at the opposite extremity of the country.

Making Exeter my head-quarters, and having sent my carpet-bag to the New London (meaning thereby the hotel of that name), I set out for Eatonfield in high spirits; and as nothing very particular occurred to me upon the road, the reader will kindly imagine, that after a journey of four days, including a day's rest for my horses at Dorchester, I had reached my destination in safety.

I drew up at the "Jolly Wrestler," the principal, because the only, house of public entertainment in Eatonfield. By courtesy it might be called an hotel; a title which I readily bestowed upon it, being anxious to conciliate the landlady, who was a buxom widow of thirty, with a very well-turned foot and ankle, and eyes which were like jet beads, only a little darker and brighter.

"My dear Miss Aleworthy," I said, when I had unhorsed myself pretty gracefully,—for as the landlady came out to meet me I had glanced at

the name upon the sign-post,—“you are looking uncommonly well, my dear Miss Aleworthy.”

“*Mrs.*, by your leave, sir!—Mrs. Aleworthy, if you please,” replied the landlady, smiling and courtesying, much pleased by the intentional misnomer, with which I had complimented her youthfulness. “Will you step in here, sir, if you please? You will find that a most delightful room, sir, commanding a view of Lord ——’s estate; and papered within the last six months.”

“Well, then, Mrs. Aleworthy,” I said; “since it pleases you to be addressed as a matron, will you kindly order some luncheon to be provided for me; and tell me whether there is a young married couple, named Sinclair, residing in this village?”

“No, sir, there is’nt, but there *was*,” said my landlady, and a tear gathered upon her eye, not unlike a dew-drop upon an elderberry. “’Twas a bad day with the poor of the parish, when Mr. Sinclair and his lady went away.”

“Then you knew my friend, did you, Mrs. Aleworthy?”

“Indeed, did I,” said my landlady; “he was such a creature as we shall not see again; the best naturedest and the kindest-hearted gentleman as ever entered the ‘Jolly Wrestler’ all my days. But Mr. Sinclair never drank any thing; he was

so very sober, sir, he was. He drank nothing but water."

When an innkeeper praises a water-drinker, depend upon it that the praise is well merited.

"He never came into this house," said Mrs. Aleworthy, in reply to a question which I had put, concerning her acquaintance with Everard. "He never dropped in here, sir, to take a cup of cider or ale, or to backbite his neighbours, as many do; but he came in when sickness was here, or when affliction was heavy upon me. 'He spoke with the tongue of angels,' sir; and Mr. Bigod, the rector, was nothing to him. And sometimes his lady would come; but she, poor thing! was weakly, and could not do as much for me as she wished. But Mr. Sinclair was never tired when he was doing good to his neighbour: and then, sir, he had such a beautiful face, just like the angel Raphael's, in the big picture up at the 'squire's, when he sat at table with Adam in Paradise! Yet he never presumed upon his beauty, nor took any liberties at all, sir. He was so good: but I cannot tell you half; no, not one quarter of Mr. Sinclair's many virtues; so I will just run across the way and call in old Mrs. Everett, the woman who keeps the cottage, where the good gentleman lodged. You will excuse me, sir; she is sure to be at home." And Mrs. Aleworthy bounded off, full

of grateful excitement, leaving me in a mood, which vibrated between pleasure and disappointment;—pleasure at hearing the praises of my friend, and disappointment at being informed of his departure.

Presently my landlady returned, bringing Mrs. Everett along with her,—a respectable, well-ordered sexagenarian, with a cap even whiter than Lady ——'s hands, and a large pair of buckles upon her shoes, like those which adorned the feet of the redoubtable Thomas Smirk, when he paid his addresses to Miss Tishy Snap;* only that those of the gentleman were pinchbeck, whilst Mrs. Everett's were "real silver," or something exceedingly like it. The old lady was delighted to see "poor dear Mr. Sinclair's friend;" and insisted upon kissing my hand,—a favour which I should have granted more readily, had she been somewhat younger and prettier; but which, under existing circumstances, I had not the ingratitude to refuse.

"Mrs. Everett," I said, when this ceremony of osculation had been duly performed by the old woman, "I know you have a great deal to tell me, so I intreat you to be seated without ceremony. I must so far encroach upon your kindness, as to request that you will indulge my curiosity regard-

* See the Adventures of *Jonathan Wild*.

ing Mr. Sinclair's affairs ; for he is the dearest friend I have in the world ; and all that concerns him is interesting to me."

" He was very poor," said Mrs. Everett drily.

I felt the full force of this reproach, and acknowledged the justice thereof, adding, at the same time, " I am sure that you will think lightly of the part which I have had in this neglect, when I tell you that it is scarcely a month since I arrived from the East Indies."

" I am glad to hear that," said Mrs. Everett ; " but heavy blame lies at somebody's door. 'Twill be a year, on the ninth of next month, since Mr. Sinclair came to lodge at my house."

" Excuse my breaking in upon you thus ; but how long is it since he quitted your roof ?"

" Very nearly four months, sir."

" And do you know whither he has gone ?"

" No more than the baby unborn. I wish, sir, that I could tell you that ; for when Mr. Sinclair went away, he left some few things behind him,—some papers, sir, and a few old books, not of any great value by the look o' them ; but I've often heard the dear gentleman say, that we are not to judge by appearances ; so I took great care of the things, hoping to restore them some day."

" And have you the papers still ?" I asked, with an eager impatience. " It may be that you will

oblige me by a sight of them : were any of them folded or addressed ?”

“ There was one packet,” replied Mrs. Everett, “ which looked like the leaves of a log-book,—just such as my poor son used to keep when he went out to sea. Mr. Sinclair used to call it a *Diary*.”

“ And it was directed ?”

“ Yes, sir, I think it was,—to a Mr. Jenkinson, or some such name ; yet, I am only guessing after all, for my memory has been failing of late, and I am terribly forgetful about names.”

“ Could you remember, if I were to assist you ? Was the name *Jerningham*, do you think ?”

“ ‘ Jerningham !’ yes, sure enough ; I thought it was somewhat like that. What did I say first ?—Jenkinson ? Well, well ; it wasn’t so very far off. But I wonder that ever I should have forgotten a name which I have heard such a many times. I fear that I am growing superannuated ; ‘ old and stupid,’—‘ old and stupid,’ as the squire called me one day.”

“ D——n the ‘squire,” I said to myself ; then addressing Mrs. Everett, “ Did you say that Mr. Sinclair very often mentioned the name of Jerningham ?”

“ Yes, sir, he did very often. He said, that he had one friend beside his wife and his God, and that friend’s name was Jerningham, but the gen-

tleman was in a strange country, many thousand miles off, and he did not know when he should see him. Why, bless me, Mrs. Aleworthy, what are you wiping your eyes about, with the corner of your apron, in that manner?"

Thus interrogated, Mrs. Aleworthy confessed; as well as her tears would let her (for she was a tender-hearted, right-feeling soul, and at all times very prone to lachrymation), that as she was going out to fetch Mrs. Everett to me, she had asked my servant, who was with the horses, the name and title of his master; and that, knowing my name was Jerningham, the appeal to her feelings, which was wrought by the unwitting praises of Mrs. Everett, had proved, altogether, irresistible; and though she knew that she was a great fool, she could not help crying for the life of her.

"Mrs. Everett," I said, "are the papers of which you spoke, still in your possession? If they are,—as my name is Jerningham, and you say that, at least some part of them were superscribed with that name,—you would be justified in handing them over to me; and I shall be greatly obliged by your doing so."

"It's a great pity, sir, I am sure; but I haven't got them papers just now. Perhaps it was very wrong of me, but I gave them to Mr. Charnock; for the dear, good young gentleman was often

down at his cottage, and Mr. Charnock was the only friend who never altered his good opinion, but clave throughout to the sweet angel; so I thought that I might give up the papers; but 'twasn't very proper, sure."

"And who is Mr. Charnock?" I inquired eagerly; "and who had ever an evil opinion of one so excellent as Mr. Sinclair?—and why did he leave Eatonfield?—Tell me all about it, I beseech you."

"Why, sir," said Mrs. Everett,—“Mr. Charnock is a learned gentleman, that lives down by Squire Spalding's lodge. We don't understand him very well, and there be some queer stories about,—they say he deals with the devil,—saving your presence, sir; but I believe he be honest enough, and a kind, well-hearted gentleman."

"Well; and why did Mr. Sinclair leave Eatonfield?"

"I don't think that the dear young gentleman was treated as he ought to have been by the quality. But Mr. Charnock, if you call upon him, will tell you, sir, all about that; whilst I talk about Mr. Sinclair's doings amongst us poor. He hadn't got much for himself, poor gentleman! but he gave more away than the squire: he went about from cottage to cottage;—wherever there was sickness or distress, there was Mr. Sinclair of a cer-

tainty ; he had no fear about infection, nor any thought at all about himself ; for he would enter the filthiest hovels in the neighbourhood as gladly as he would go to the squire's. Then, when anybody quarrelled, Mr. Sinclair was sure to set them to right ; was any one ill-treated ? Mr. Sinclair stood up for the innocent ; did any creature want assistance ? Mr. Sinclair would be applied to immediately. He was always the poor man's champion, sir ; he had no fears in the world ; and if Lord —— had injured a beggar, Mr. Sinclair would have gone and upbraided him. If ever there was a pair of angels upon earth, it was Mr. Sinclair and his lady ; for she, poor creature ! though she could not go about very much, by reason of her delicate state, would stay at home and work for the poor ; but that she couldn't do very long ; for she was brought to-bed in my house of a beautiful little girl, when she had lived with me three or four months, and she never got strong after that. Well, sir, I ought to have told you, that whilst Mr. Sinclair was with me, he supported himself by painting ; and beautifully well he did it, sir ; he made such pretty little drawings of all the country about ; and he took them to Exeter to sell,—at least, so I suppose, for he went to the town every month and carried his folio with him. But, bless you, sir, when I say he supported

himself, I mean that he supported all his neighbours, for not one quarter of what he earned was spent upon his own comforts. And then he was so clever, sir; he was a better doctor than Mr. Blood, and a better parson than Mr. Bigod; and, between you and I, sir, I believe that for no other reason they hated him. But that is no business of mine, and it becomes me not to speak of my betters; yet, I will say, that Mr. Sinclair was so kind and gentle in his treatment, when he went about to heal a sick person, that it was quite a pleasure to be ill, if it was only to be doctored by Mr. Sinclair,—and then, sir, as to the welfare of the soul, he never damned any body at all; but whispered comfort wherever he went, bidding even the greatest of sinners hope for God's mercy on the Judgment-day: so that, whenever any body thought himself dying, he would send for Mr. Sinclair to pray with him; and all this, sir, you know, was to the great scandal of the rector. And so it happened, at last, that the more dear, good Mr. Sinclair was beloved and honoured by the poor, the more he became hated by the rich, though, at first, sir, he was in high favour, and was often up at the squire's. But, at last, they all persecuted him,—there was Mr. Spalding, of the park,—him that we call the squire; and his lady, quite as bad as any; and there was Mr. Bigod, the rector; and Mr.

Blood, the apothecary; and Mr. Littleton, the lawyer; they all came to hate him in time; till, at last, the doctor protested that he would not attend Mrs. Sinclair, though he might just as well have kept away for all the good that he did; and the squire gave notice to me (for, bless you, sir, I am a poor woman, and one of Mr. Spalding's tenants) that if I allowed Mr. Sinclair to lodge in my cottage any longer, he would eject me the very next rent-day; so the dear gentleman would not listen to my entreaties, but declared he would leave Eatonfield; not that he was afraid of the squire, nor of the rector, nor of any body else,—but it was all for my sake, sir; it was,—for he would rather have died, I'm sure, than have brought a poor widow-woman to trouble,—so he paid me his rent, every farthing; and he went away all of a sudden: and now, bless his dear heart! I don't know where he is bidding; but this, sir, I can answer for it, sure, wherever in the world he may be, many a blessing has followed him, many prayers been offered for his safety.—Lord, sir, he was the heavenliest creature that ever entered a poor man's dwelling.” And thus, having finished her story, Mrs. Everett fell a-weeping; and my landlady, whose fine black eyes had not once been dry during the recital, now heaved a deep sigh, and crying “God Almighty

bless him !” applied the corner of her white apron to her plump rosy cheeks.

When the good women had a little recovered themselves, I intimated my intention of paying a visit to the Mr. Charnock, of whom mention has been made, and who, as Mrs. Everett said, was in the possession of those papers, which Sinclair had left behind him, and which I was so anxious to gain. Upon which, Mrs. Everett having regretted that she was too infirm to walk such a distance, my pretty little landlady started up and offered to conduct me to the cottage, a civility which I gladly accepted with a very profuse tender of thanks.

The cottage in which Mr. Charnock resided, was a funny little picturesque dwelling, not very much unlike a straw bonnet, with the skirting of a green veil ; for the roof had been recently thatched, and the walls were overgrown with jessamine. There was a neat little garden about the house, at least a plot of ground intended to be such ; for I will not speak positively to the neatness of the aforesaid Mr. Charnock, because I might endanger my veracity by doing so ; some shadowy reminiscences still haunting me of a garden which was no garden, but a tangled wilderness of weeds, and of walks, hypothetically gravel, the lineaments of which were wholly defaced by overgrowths of vegetable matter,—

appearances which forcibly reminded me of certain energetic verses, writ by that sweet hymnist, Dr. Watts, full of excellent conceits and quaint morality, concerning a "Sluggard," of his acquaintance, whose garden the said Doctor passed by. The remaining features of Mr. Charnock's estate may be described without any great prolixity; for the house and garden having been delineated, in a style which I intended to be graphic, it remains only for the topographer to state, that there was an orchard at the back of the cottage, in a corner of which (i. e. the orchard) there was a *linny*, which, in Devonshire dialect, signifies nothing else than a shed, a species of building very frequent in that part of his Majesty's dominions, and intended, I presume, for the accommodation of gentlemen, who may be caught in rain.

For the better understanding of what follows, in the interview between myself and Mr. Charnock, I will obligingly furnish the "studious reader" with an insight into the peculiar character of the strange gentleman, who dwelt in the cottage, distinguished by the inhabitants of Eatonfield as the "Cottage hard by the Squire's," premising only that I have lately seen a summary account of his life, ending with the catastrophe of his death, in the obituary of the Gentleman's Magazine.

Mr. Cornelius Charnock was a gentleman of

limited fortune, who, for the last fifteen years, had been in search of the philosopher's stone. I will not take upon me positively to avouch that he ever expected to find it, but that he was an "ingeniously elaborate student in the most divine mysteries of hermetique learning," I have it upon the authority of my own senses, which saw the alchymist at his work, and heard his profession of faith. From his very childhood he had been devoted to chemistry:—an accidental gaseous explosion, which took place inopportunately at prayer time, had occasioned his expulsion from school; and ever since that memorable day he had been madly devoted to the science. Norton's *Ordinall* was his favourite poem; and Ashmole's *Theatrum Chemicum*, the best book that had ever been compiled. He had built himself a laboratory, with a furnace and every other appendage quite complete, wherein he "hunted the green lion" with marvellous assiduity, having succeeded to such an extent as to set fire to his house so often, that the Insurance Offices had come to the determination of negotiating no further with him. It was said in the village that he was a conjuror, and that he traded with the prince of darkness, but in reality he was nobody's enemy but his own, being a harmless and generous man, who deserved no more uncourteous title than that of "an experimental

philosopher." He had a library of ragged volumes all treating of the "Hermetic Art,"—open entrances to shut palaces,—complete systems of occult philosophy,—brief histories of the Golden Calf,—the ingenious works of Geber, Lilly, Cornelius Agrippa, and many others of this sort, ornamented the shelves of Mr. Charnock; and, without actually expecting to discover the "*thesaurus absconditus*," he delighted in practically illustrating these books, by following up the experiments contained in them, heaping one man's wisdom upon another's, and deriving from such combinations many very important results, which consoled him with the cheering reflection that he had, at all events, made a discovery of some sort, though he had not discovered the philosopher's stone. Chemistry is so much indebted to the students of the occult art, that I doubt whether the old alchymists have any legitimate title to their berths in the "Ship of Fools."

A strange-looking man-servant, not unlike Abel Drugger, with his shirt-sleeves tucked up to his shoulders, answered the summons of the door-bell. The perspiration, in huge drops, was pouring down his begrimed face, which somewhat resembled, in its tints, the countenance of a half-washed chimney-sweeper, or of a tragedian in the last scene of Othello, when the burnt-cork, in the hurry of ac-

tion, has been partially effaced from his cheeks. A large blacksmith's apron hung almost down to his ankles, and in one hand he held a pair of bellows, whilst, with the other, he opened the gate. He had just emerged from the laboratory, in which sanctified place, he informed me, that his master was at work.

I was shewn into a neat little parlour, remarkable for nothing further than for two water-colour portraits, of Sir Edward Kelly and Dr. Dee, which were suspended over the chimney-piece in company; and were the tutelary deities of the place. In all other respects, the furniture of the room bore no exclusive stamp about it; it was solid, inornate, disposed with some taste, and a great regard for the comfort of the proprietor. I scarcely had time to look about me, before the master of the house appeared; and, he being a remarkable personage, I must honour him with a paragraph to himself.

He was about forty years of age; tall, and of a spare habit. He had a pale, thin face, which, though not actually handsome, was strikingly intellectual and benevolent. A physiognomist would have predicated great things of the mind that informed such a countenance; for wisdom and kindness were graven thereon, in characters speaking to the heart. His body was wrapped in the

foldings of a large "rug gown;" and he had on just such a little cap as Erasmus has always been painted in. His feet were encased in a pair of carpet slippers; and his hands were buried in gloves, the prodigious thickness, and the scorched appearance of which, suggested their usefulness at once. There was something in the highest degree interesting in his whole exterior,—a something that at the same time awakened your attention, and commanded your respect. He bore the semblance of a man who had devoted his nights and days to the investigation of glorious science,—who had wasted the oil of health, and dried up the marrow in his bones, whilst diving into the mysteries of nature, and prosecuting immortal discoveries. He was precisely such a singular being as I could imagine the famous Dr. Faustus, ere he sold himself to the devil, and abandoned "divine philosophy."

He bowed as he entered the room, and, throwing his gloves upon the table, he handed me a chair, and addressed me:—

"You must excuse my dishabille, this morning: you see me in my common working dress,—my laboratory costume, the insignia of my pleasant calling." And then he proceeded to inquire into the object of my unexpected visit.

I informed him in a few words; and Mr. Charock was evidently affected when I mentioned the

name of Sinclair; but he replied promptly to the inquiry which I had made concerning the papers.

“ Mr. Jerningham, I am sorry to tell you that those manuscripts have been destroyed.”

“ Destroyed !”

“ Ay, sir! and by *me!* Not, however, intentionally, for I set too high a value, Mr. Jerningham, upon the slightest relic of my poor friend, wantonly to have annihilated these papers.”

“ *Relic!* Good God ! Mr. Charnock, you don't mean that he is *dead?*”

“ He is dead, I am afraid, to *me,*” replied the chemist, with a sigh ; “ for I fear that I have lost sight of him for ever. I know not where he is to be found.”

“ But the papers!” I exclaimed delightedly ; for a very unpleasant suspicion had flashed across my brain ; and now I rejoiced that it was unfounded.

“ The papers,”—replied Mr. Charnock,—“ of the papers I will speak candidly. They were destroyed by my carelessness, or, rather, by the carelessness of my servant. Perhaps, when you entered my cottage, you may have observed that it has been recently thatched. A few weeks ago my laboratory caught fire ; and these papers, which you are so anxious to possess, were, unfortunately, consumed in the conflagration.”

“ Well, well, Mr. Charnock, I have no reason to complain ; for, doubtless, you were the heaviest sufferer ; and accidents *will* happen ! ”

“ Not at all ! ” interrupted the alchymist, — “ *not* at all, sir, for — *I was insured !* ”

“ Insured ! Why, bless me, Mr. Charnock, would have rather lost bank-notes to the amount of a thousand pounds, than that those manuscripts should have been destroyed. *Insured !* — *what* — *it*, Mr. Charnock, you could not insure those papers.”

“ It is not a matter of calculation at all,” replied Mr. Charnock very coolly. “ But I would rather have lost a manuscript of Henry Cornelius Agrippa than have suffered the destruction of those papers if I had had any choice in the business, which, unfortunately, I had not. But I have been sufficiently punished, Mr. Jerningham ; for what with my thatched roof, and the dangerous contiguity of my furnace, not one office in the country will give me a policy of insurance ; so that if I catch fire again ’twill be a lamentable accident indeed.”

There was something which I did not much like in these considerations of the chemist : but I was vexed by the loss of my poor friend’s manuscripts ; and I looked upon the innocent cause of my misfortunes with a distorted eye of injustice. I an-

swered him very abruptly; and may I be forgiven, if I transgressed the limits of urbanity and kindness.

“Mr. Charnock!” I said, “whatever may have occasioned the conflagration, which has done me such an irreparable injury, it matters not,—the injury is done. I have left my home and my family (having only arrived, a few weeks, from one of the uttermost regions of the world) in search of my poor friend Sinclair, whom I love more than any other creature on the surface of this dædal earth. If you can give me any information relating to my heart’s brother, I shall consider myself, Mr. Charnock, eternally beholden to your courtesy.”

“I will tell you all I know,” replied the experimental philosopher; “but let me preface my narrative, by assuring you that I honour the motives, and admire the perseverance, which have instigated and enabled you to prosecute an undertaking so worthy of your exertions.” And Mr. Charnock, having shaken me by the hand, entered into some important details, which, having enshrined in my own words, I shall transfer to the next chapter.

Mr. Charnock, having finished his relation, rose from the sofa on which he sate, and, pointing to the two portraits, which adorned the space above his mantel-piece, declared that they were wrought by the pencil of Everard Sinclair himself.

“ Indeed ! They are exquisitely done. That ^{is} Sir Edward Kelly, and the other, if I mistake not, Mr. Charnock, is—

One named Dee,
In a rug gown,

as Ben Jonson has it, in that excellent comedy, the ~~the~~ Alchymist.”

“ Upon my word, Mr. Jerningham, I must compliment you upon your knowledge. Of a certainty you are quite right,— Kelly and Dee, they are my household gods :—beautifully drawn, are they not ? May I ask whether you are a chemist ?”

“ Not at all, Mr. Charnock. My uncle happens to possess an admirable collection of prints ; and I recognized the portraits at once. The original of these, if I mistake not, is a frontispiece to a book of Casaubon’s. But I know nothing of chemistry myself, although I can easily understand what a fascinating study it may become ; it is so very pregnant with results ; and the every-day progress of your studies is so palpably marked by an endless variety of effects, that it must be particularly attractive to an ardent inquirer after natural truth.”

“ Exactly so, Mr. Jerningham,—would you like to see my laboratory ?”

CHAPTER III.

The extreme gentleness of his nature never weakened, either the firmness of his mind or the steadiness of his resolutions.

ADAM SMITH upon DAVID HUME.

For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

POPE.

Mrs. EVERETT was quite right, when she said that poor Sinclair had been treated scurvily by the "quality folk." Nothing could have been more ungenerous than the behaviour, which every individual (with the exception of Mr. Charnock) composing the *gentry* of the village, adopted towards this excellent youth. It was a system of the most virulent and selfish persecution, which makes me blush for humanity, as I record it. I know nothing more painful in composition than to enter into sickening details of sordid and unfeeling excesses.

The genteel society of Eatonfield was constituted of the same materials as that of most other little villages throughout the kingdom of Great Britain; the principal personages being the Rev. Mr. Bigod, the vicar; Mr. Judas Littleton, the attorney; Mr. Bartholomew Blood, the apothecary; and last, though not least, in importance, Mr. Archibald Spalding the squire, who was a gentleman of some figure in the county, a justice of the peace, and a fox-hunter.

How it happened that, in process of time, all these dignified individuals came to unite in one common cause, to exterminate Everard Sinclair, is the subject matter of this chapter.

The sole object of Everard's existence was to do good—and he did it. Some may think that lacking money, he lacked the power of doing good. It is not possible that there should be conceived a more egregious fallacy than this. Money may assist the endeavours of the wise man, but, where there is no wisdom, money is a dangerous weapon. It is not enough that a man should *desire* to do good; he must *know*, at the same time, *how* to do it. Wisdom without wealth may do much; wealth without wisdom nothing. Knowledge, at all times, assists benevolence; riches very often prevent it. Wisdom is wealth, but wealth is *not* wisdom.

But Everard Sinclair was benevolent and wise. His charity was of the most valuable order; because it was *active* charity. Had he given tens of thousands to the poor, without entering their gates, he would have achieved but a small fraction of the good which his exertions brought about. Energy of purpose, subtlety of device, unshrinking fortitude, and laborious zeal, were instruments in his hands, which compensated for the absence of gold, and were the constant hand-maidens of his benevolence, whose resources were unfailing, however conflicting the difficulties against which they were summoned to contend. Beneficence was a science with him—and how to be beneficent his study.

To the service of the poor and the afflicted did Everard especially devote himself. When he first entered the village of Eatonfield, he found that there was much of wretchedness surrounding him upon every side. He went about from house to house—or rather from hovel to hovel—he inquired, he investigated—he analyzed—he did nothing unadvisedly. There was destitution beneath one roof—there was squalid sickness beneath another—there was gross immorality beneath a third. What was the occasion of all this? There was work enough for the labouring man; bread, if not as cheap as it ought to have been, cheaper than it had been for years; a fine healthy country; a

was utterly destitute and
ject condition. He had lo
law-suit: or rather he had
the loss of his whole fort
beggar in the world.

"There is an attorney
Everard.

He entered a second be
straw pallet was stretched
five children hanging round
ing for food, and some wee
The husband was at work in
of the ensuing week had bee
medicine; and there was no
another word of advice until
produced to pay for it. In
woman might die,—*might*; th
her.

a mother was wailing over the loss of her daughter's honour, and the girl, in accents of despair, was bemoaning the eternal condemnation which the vicar had pronounced upon her soul.—She had been seduced by the vicar's son; and, because she had obstinately refused to declare the name of her seducer, the reverend gentleman had cursed her in his fury, though her silence was out of kindness to him.

“There is a young profligate and an old priest in this village,” said Everard.

Now there was nothing in all this which was in the least surprising to Everard. He had often witnessed similar scenes,—he had often received similar answers; and what is more, the experience he had gained had taught him how to strengthen his resources. For two or three years past, he had been acquiring a knowledge of medicine; during the same space of time, he had been rendering himself acquainted with the leading features of the English law; and, though he could neither be said to have been a skilful physician, or a very astute lawyer, when it is considered that he did not presume, *professionally*, to be either the one or the other, it may be said, without infringing upon the truth, that his information, both legal and medical, was of no very despicable order.

The sacrificial and active devotion with which

the gentry of Eatonfield, arising out of charities, and causing the departure of the truth, however disgusting, must have been simply this:—

Before Everard had resided many months in the village of Eatonfield, Mr. Judas Littleton, attorney, and Mr. Bartholomew Block, the curate, became sensible, to their great mortification, of a considerable diminution in the number of communicants, which were wont to arise from their labours; and, upon investigating the cause, they had led to this appalling decrease of profits, to their great scandal, that Mr. Everard was the enemy who was ruining them. It was an astounding truth, but one against which there was so little to be urged, doubly distressing to these worthies, that if poor people can procure legal and medical aid *gratis*, they will never, out of regard to their professions, disburse for either the one or the other.

“Don’t you think, Littleton,” said

things; but I think you might find some fellow to swear an offence against him, and I'll go halves in the expenses."

"I don't know, Blood," replied the attorney. "It certainly might be done; but couldn't you lay him by the heels with some strong medicine or other, just so as to cripple him for life?—Nothing more; I'm a merciful man."

"Strong medicine!" exclaimed the doctor;—"what do you mean by strong medicine?"

"Don't force me to be more explicit:—*Diri, dixi,*" responded Mr. Littleton, with a knowing twinkle of his green eye, and a finger pressed sagaciously to his lip:—"A word to the wise; eh!"

"I would rather that you did the business," said Mr. Bartholomew Blood.

However, they entered into a compact to expel Everard from Eatonfield, though they did not very well foresee the means whereby this was to be accomplished. They agreed to consult Mr. Bigod, and for that purpose they asked him to dinner. The two gentlemen having determined that the honour of entertaining the vicar should be decided by the toss of a halfpenny, it fell to the lot of the apothecary, for the lawyer had a particular method of 'skying a copper,' and cheated. After dinner Mr. Littleton opened the proceedings, by asking in a

casual manner, what the divine thought of Mr. Sinclair.

“He is an atheist,” said the Rev. Mr. Bigod.

The attorney exchanged glances with the apothecary, whilst their clerical guest continued—“He is an atheist,—I’m convinced of it, gentlemen,—a confirmed follower of anti-Christ—he is leading my flock astray—he is inculcating the most satanic doctrines—he told Betsy Draper, the other day,—now the girl is a horrid prostitute, and has just become a mother, as you know,—that she might save her soul alive if she turned from her evil courses. Did you ever hear the like on’t, Mr. Blood? Upon my honour, I believe that the unclaimed child is his own.”

Now the zeal of the Rev. Gentleman had overlooked a very important circumstance, viz.—that the pregnancy of the female in question had exhibited itself but three days subsequently to the first appearance of Everard in the village of Eatonfield, a fact which at once suggested itself to the penetrating understanding of the lawyer, but which was not sufficiently clear, at first sight, to the medical practitioner.

“There is something in that, Mr. Bigod,” said the apothecary, passing the bottle.

But Mr. Judas Littleton, though he shook his

sapient head in refutation of the crude opinions to which his friends had so unfortunately given utterance, was evidently very much pleased by something or other that was stirring in his thoughts ; for having emptied off a heel-tap of port, he smacked his lips with an emphatic significance, and striking his left thigh with the palm of his right hand, he looked folio volumes, though he uttered not a single word.

“ You don’t think, then, Littleton,” said Barthomew Blood, “that Sinclair is the father of the brat.”

“ Not, if the child was born in due season,” replied the lawyer, with a groan ; “ why, you ought to know these things better than I do, doctor. However, if it were not impossible that Sinclair should be the father, I don’t know a person in the village to whom I would rather attribute it.”

“ Nor I,” exclaimed the apothecary, “ what wicked eyes he has got !”—Mr. Barthomew Blood squinted.

“ I’m exactly of your opinion,” cried the Vicar, “and what libidinous yellow locks ! No good ever came of long hair.”—Mr. Bigod was quite bald.

“ What a pretty woman his wife is,” remarked the apothecary.

“ *Wife !*” cried Mr. Judas Littleton, “ wife ! I should like to see the certificate—I’ll answer for it, a left-handed marriage—I have long smelt a rat

you're right after all; she looks no better than she should be,—an impudent trollop, I'll be bound.

“A most immoral couple,” chimed in the tholomew Blood, “a disgrace to the profession of the doctor!”

“They will corrupt the whole village,” cried Rev. Mr. Bigod aloud.

“They will spoil my practice,” wailed the apothecary to himself.

“They will ruin me of a surety,” cried the grasping attorney.

“We must drive him out of the county,” said all three at once; and before this conclusion they had unanimously agreed to, the wickedest rumour that ever the malignity of malice has devised.

Whilst this conspiracy was brewing, a more inferior dignitary of Eatonfield, a more zealous enemy than either one of them, was busied in the egg of mischief, and maturing a plot, which was destined to effect the ruin of the three.

“This enemy,”

beautiful, nor accomplished, except in her own conceit, which was of such an unbounded nature, that it invested her at the same time with the youth of Hebe, the beauty of Venus, and the accomplishments of the three Graces. Now it happened that a week or two after the arrival of the Sinclairs in Eatonfield, that this lady was taking the air on horseback accompanied by her groom, when the animal upon which she rode, being seized with a sudden panic at the sight of a scarlet cloak on the back of an old woman, became altogether ungovernable, and bounding forward at a tremendous rate, would certainly have occasioned some bodily injury to the person of the fair equestrian, if Everard, who was near the spot at the time, had not courageously arrested with one arm the progress of the infuriated animal, whilst with the other encircling the waist of the rider, he gently assisted her to alight.

Mrs. Spalding was not hurt, but her nerves were considerably shattered; and having prudently determined not to remount, she accepted with great alacrity the offer of an escort to her house, which Everard was polite enough to tender.

On the way home she did not say much; indeed she was too alarmed to be conversible. But she leaned upon Everard with a gentle pressure, and declared that she was excessively weak.

When they reached the hall-door, Everard and Sinclair was about to depart, but Mrs. Spalding insisted upon his entering. She was "sure that he must want some refreshment,—at all events glass of wine."

"I never drink wine," said Everard.

Mrs. Spalding rang the bell. She had recovered herself wonderfully by the time they had entered the drawing-room. Mrs. Spalding sat down on the sofa. A footman answered the bell.

"Is your master at home?" said the lady.

"No, ma'am; he be gone out. Master desired me to say that he shall not be home to dinner."

This was excellent news to the lady. No sooner had the servant departed than she began to lavish upon Everard all the most laudatory epithets she could remember. She called him her preserver—her redeemer—her saviour. There was no end of her gratitude. He was by turns brave—noble—glorious—and chivalric. And she was herself eternally indebted, and indissolubly beholden to his gallantry. She did not know how to absolve herself of the immense debt of gratitude that she owed; she was ready to lay down all that she possessed at the feet of her admirable preserver, and was only prevented by the discreet distance which he kept, from throwing herself into the arms of the hero.

Everard did not, at first, know what to make of her conduct. He interpreted it in the most charitable manner; and thought that her extravagant expressions were merely the first ebullitions of mingled gratitude and joy, which, when she reflected upon the dangers she had escaped, burst forth spontaneously from her heart. However, he thought fit to make his escape as speedily as possible.

But this pleasing ignorance was not of very long endurance. Our friend was now frequently invited to the Squire's; and generally when Mr. Spalding was absent. Everard declined the proffered civilities, whenever he decently could do so, but he was not upon all occasions enabled to evade them with propriety; though Mrs. Spalding's designs became every day more manifest, and Everard, though he had no fears for himself, was very much perplexed by *her* conduct, about the behaviour that *he* ought to adopt. The assiduities of this unlovely seducer were of such a very glaring nature that Everard, unsuspecting as he was, could not be mistaken as to their import. She would manage to meet him, in his daily walks, or in the cottage of some poor person. Indeed, she became on a sudden so exceedingly charitable, that the poor people of Eatonfield were beholden, if no one else was, to the amorous propen-

sities of the lady. Nor was this all; for Mrs. Spalding was seized with a most unaccountable love of the picturesque, which was all the more vehement now for never having exhibited itself before; she went out every day with a pencil and sketch-book in her hand, for the sole purpose of meeting poor Everard engaged upon a similar pursuit. One day she asked Everard whether he ever took likenesses; to which Everard replied that he had taken a few. Whereupon Mrs. Spalding invited the artist to paint her portrait full length, offering fifty guineas for the same, and hinting that she should "like so much to be taken in the character of Diana."

But Everard declined the offer.

Not to dwell for too long a time upon these fulsome details, let me hurry on at once to the catastrophe of this unsuccessful amour. The passion of Mrs. Spalding, at length, became altogether ungovernable, and thinking it a favourable opportunity when Everard's wife was lying-in, she threw herself one day upon his neck, twined her fingers in his yellow hair, and had kissed him half a dozen times before the astonished youth could extricate himself from her Phædra-like embraces; but Everard had no sooner recovered his breath than he asked the lady if she was not ashamed of herself—she, a married woman, and old enough to be his

mother, to make an attack upon the virtue of a young man who was joined in the holy state of wedlock to a beautiful and amiable girl ! He had not words enough to express his abhorrence of Mrs. Spalding's conduct. His first thought was to rush out of the room ; his second, to reason with the lady, and endeavour to convince her of the impropriety which so glaringly marked her behaviour ; but he had not uttered very many words when Mrs. Spalding's frenzy returned, and renewing her embraces with increased fervour, she declared that " she was burning with love of the most beautiful creature in existence." So, Everard, thinking it best to remove the temptation out of her way, hurried from her house in an agony which it is easier to fancy than describe.

But if it were difficult to describe the sensations of this admirable youth, how much more so to analyze the feelings of the infamous woman who had endeavoured to corrupt him ;—love, hatred, jealousy, revenge, all struggled for the mastery in her bosom. Her first impression was that she ought to commit suicide, and I dare say that if there had been a bottle of laudanum in the room she would have taken it in the moment of her fury ; but as nothing of the sort was at hand, she contented herself with ringing the bell, and ordering up a bottle of sherry, from which bottle she took

three or four glasses, one after another, as fast as ever she could drink them; and having strengthened her nerves by this vinous application, she seated herself again upon the sofa, and bethought herself of what she ought to do. The *spretæ injuria forma* weighed heavily upon her soul.

She had not been seated long before she started up with a sudden effort, and, going straight to her husband, declared that the 'exemplary' Mr. Sinclair had been making an attempt upon her virtue. She was acting the character of Potiphar's wife, and was determined to sustain it throughout.

"No; no;" said the squire, shaking his head incredulously, "you can't come over me with that story, d—n me, tis too good! A young man of two or three and twenty to make an attempt upon *your* virtue. Faith, he must have a liquorish tooth. That cock won't fight, Mrs. Spalding."

The lady was highly indignant, but she insisted upon the truth of her story.

"D—n me! I don't believe it," resumed Mr. Spalding, in a peremptory voice; "he has the prettiest woman in the village for a wife, and he wouldn't go poaching in my manor—hang it! I think better of his taste."

"*Wife!*" shrieked the offended beauty, "d'you call that woman his wife?"

"Faith!" said the Squire, very coolly, "I

know very little indeed about the family affairs of Mrs. Sinclair, but she is a very well-behaved young woman, and I wish some one else was as pretty."

But Mrs. Spalding was not to be balked; she went down upon her knees, and with a few solemn protestations, and some very theatrical gestures, called Heaven to witness the truth of the assertions she had made. "'Tis a very unlikely story," said Mr. Spalding, snapping his fingers, "but I don't care if it be true; he is a cursed fool for his pains," and Mrs. Spalding seeing that it was impossible to arouse the jealousy of her husband, determined upon some future occasion to awaken the resentment of the Squire by touching some more vulnerable part: when the shooting season commenced, she would denounce Mr. Sinclair as a poacher; in the meantime she might do him an injury by disseminating certain reports "of the pious young gentleman's connexion with a woman who pretended to be his wife." She attacked the Squire therefore a second time, protesting that such an immoral couple would pollute the purity of the neighbourhood, and hinting that it was the duty of Mr. Spalding, as a justice of the peace, to exterminate them.

"Confound your politics," cried the Squire, "I don't care a brass farthing whether they be man

and wife or not. What business is it of mine, I should like to know? It doesn't concern me, whether the woman be a good'un or a bad'un, so as she doesn't swear her bye-blows to me. To be sure, and now I come to think on't, she is almost too pretty for a wife," and he looked significantly at his own spouse, who had not, certainly, enough beauty to prevent her from being virtuous.

"He shall rue the hour," said Mrs. Spalding, "that subjected me to these taunts."

But Mr. Charnock clave to the Sinclairs. The spirit of the chemist was a gentle one, and he loved Everard as a brother. There was something, to a certain extent, congenial in the dispositions of these two; and Sinclair spent many an hour, which he did not think uselessly employed, in the society of the hermetic philosopher. The wicked rumours of Everard's illicit intercourse soon smote upon the ears of Mr. Charnock; but he did not believe one syllable of the profligate reports which were circulating. He went straightway to Mrs. Everett's cottage, and acquainted his young friend with the cruel insinuations that had reached him, declaring at the same time that he deemed the story, which he had heard, to be an infamous fabrication throughout.

"I have an enemy in this place," said Everard. He went immediately to his writing-desk, and took

thence a bundle of papers, from which he selected one which proved to be his marriage certificate.

"I needed not this," said Mr. Charnock, "to convince me; but I'm glad that you have it. It may be of use hereafter."

"Use," exclaimed Everard!—"I would not, for the whole world, have produced this insignificant document, had I not known you, Mr. Charnock, to be my friend. Fear shall not wring it from me. Let mine enemies think what they like;—I am not afraid of contumely. In the meantime, *I forgive them.*"

"But your wife, Mr. Sinclair," cried the chemist, "and your baby of a week old."

"Thank you, Mr. Charnock; thank you," replied Everard, extending his hand; "*that* alters the case. I have spoken thoughtlessly, and I confess my error. For the sake of others, I will yield that to the conventional opinions of the world, which for my own sake I would never concede."

Mr. Charnock was a gentleman of some importance in the village of Eatonfield. He was not rich, but he was independent;—the poor people regarded him superstitiously, and the gentry were somewhat afraid of him; for he had lived in the place many years, during which time he had comported himself with such unswerving integrity, and such dignified uprightness, that he possessed great

influence in the neighbourhood, from never having in any way lowered himself. He was, in truth, a respectable personage; and if there was something mysterious in his studies, which troubled the ignorant, he was, on that account, the more venerated; for people generally set a great value on what they do not understand. Besides, Mr. Charnock, before the arrival of the Sinclairs, was the only resident in the village who never took a farthing from their pockets.

Mr. Charnock entered, with his whole soul, into the business of refuting these calumnies. He even neglected his laboratory, although his work was in the "Regimen of Saturn;" and his helpmate was little of an *adeptist*. But the reputation of his friend was dearer to him than a dozen philosopher's stones; for he really loved Everard, and would have blown up his laboratory to serve him.

Mr. Charnock gave a dinner party, whereunto Everard was invited to meet Mr. Spalding, Mr. Bigod, that reverend gentleman's son, and last, though not least in importance, the Honourable Clarence de Mowbray, third son of the Earl of —, and member for a small town, about seven miles removed from Eatonfield.

The object of this dinner party was to demonstrate, in a public manner, the implicit confidence which Mr. Charnock placed in the virtue and

respectability of his friend; and, as there was not a man in the county of stricter morality than the chemist, such confidence went far to determine the character of any person in the neighbourhood.

After dinner, though Everard was a water-drinker, he still retained his seat at the table. The bottle was passed briskly; for Mr. Bigod and his son were fond of a little indulgence in this way. The conversation turned upon religion.—People, when they are half tipsy, are too prone to converse on this subject.

“For my part,” said Mr. Spalding, “I’m a friend to old Mother Church:—I pay tithes regularly, eh, Doctor! and if it were not for the “meet” on Saturdays, I should never miss Divine Service. But, hang it, after a hard run, one likes to snooze a little of a morning.”

Nothing could be more satisfactory than this.—Mr. Bigod smiled, and passed the bottle.

They spake of the Bible. The vicar poured out a bumper, and declared that it was “the best book in the world.”

“For my part,” said Everard Sinclair, “I don’t think we make enough of it.”

“How so?” cried the reverend gentleman. “We have morning and evening lessons, besides sermons, which expound the Scripture, twice every Sunday;

and then, sir, as I humbly opine, there are Bible Societies in all parts of the kingdom."

"You mistake me, sir," replied Everard, mildly. "I mean that we read the Scriptures much too superficially, in general; whilst the few, who study the sacred writings, are more prone to engage themselves in the discussion of theological subtleties, and in controverting nice school points, than in seeking for important moral lessons in the pages of holy writ,—lessons, which will teach us how to live blameless in the sight of the Creator."

"I don't understand these new-fangled doctrines," said Mr. Bigod, winking at his son.—"May I ask, sir,—I beg pardon,—whether you are an Arian, or a Socinian?"

"Upon my word," replied Everard, "I am not conscious of being either; but it may be that I am one or both; but, knowing only the names of these sects, I cannot tell you whether I subscribe to their tenets."

Some observations were passed regarding the Old Testament. Mr. Charnock discoursed scientifically upon the Mosaic account of the creation: he alluded to the writings of Cuvier and other modern geologists; he entered, with great minuteness, into a description of some very curious antediluvian remains, which he had been lately examining in the metropolis. The whole length of his

discourse went to overthrow all that has been argued in favour of the Mosaic cosmogony. Mr. Charnock was a free-thinker; and he did not hesitate to speak out plainly,—but the Rev. Mr. Bigod said nothing.

Everard had listened with profound attention to the arguments of his kind-hearted host. In fact, he was the only one of the party who was able to follow them distinctly. When Mr. Charnock ceased speaking, he smiled at his young friend; for, to tell the truth, he had been more eloquent than he was wont to be, hoping that the vicar would reply to him. But the Rev. Gentleman was not so ungrateful as to drink Mr. Charnock's claret, and then to controvert his theories.

But Everard did not smile. He was too full of thought. He waited for a few moments, lest any one else should be inclined to speak, and then, in his usual gentle voice, which never, under any circumstances, was angry or dogmatical, he thus replied to Mr. Charnock's objections :—

“There is something very ingenious in all that you have said, Mr. Charnock; and I confess that I am altogether incompetent to produce any material arguments which can affect the stability of your theory, for I have never reflected upon the subject, and am as ignorant about fossil remains, as I am

about the Eleusinian mysteries. It is generally believed that the world was first created just one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years anterior to the great flood; but, if modern philosophers can prove that it was created very many years earlier, it is a matter of very little consequence, which need not distress one single good Christian. That there are, and will be, designers in the world who may take advantage of such a contemptible bit of knowledge, and apply it to the injury of religion, there cannot be entertained a doubt,—cavillers will spring up, and if they cannot find a rent in one place, they will proceed to look out for one in another. For my part, if it were incontrovertibly proved that the world was created out of chaos ten thousand years before the deluge, I should not, on that account, think one tittle more meanly of the Old Testament. He who goes to that invaluable book to study history or natural philosophy, applies it to a very bad purpose. And this brings me back to a matter which I was proceeding to comment on before. We do not sufficiently consider the morality of the Old Testament. We do not perceive the beautiful allegories, pervading certain passages of Holy Writ, which we are, for the most part, contented to read, as though they were barren facts, or, at all events, from which nothing par-

ticular is to be derived but a general impression of the goodness of God."

"And what more could you wish?" cried Mr. Bigod.—"Allegories!—Heaven forbid!—Have I been holding converse with an atheist?—an infidel, who would endeavour to prove that the Old Testament is a mere parcel of fables."

"I did not say *mere* fables," replied Everard, very meekly. "You are labouring under a misconception, I think."

"The Old Testament," cried the vicar, "is either true or false. It either contains facts or fictions,—history or allegory. It cannot contain both."

"Leave him to me, father," whispered young Mr. Bigod. "I'll roast him before we have done." Mr. Harry Bigod was a young Oxford spark,—the same exemplary youth, who had seduced Betsey Draper.

"With submission," resumed Everard, "there may be an allegory contained under cover of an historical fact."

"How so?" cried the vicar.

"It may be, that I don't explain myself very well."

"I don't think you do," said the vicar.

"I will put a case, then," replied Everard.—

“When Abraham went up to the mountain to sacrifice his son Isaac,—and when he offered up a ram in his stead,—this, though an historical event, is a type, and was intended as such, of the sacrifice of the lamb of God.”

“We all know that,” said Mr. Bigod.

“And for that very reason,” cried Everard, “I adduced it in this place; because I knew that you could say nothing against it. But I will now put another case, which may not be liable to the same objection. David slew the Philistine with a pebble from the brook. The brook is the brook of truth,—Goliath is the giant of infidelity. The whole is a prefiguration of the spread of Christianity, which has made its way, and is making its way, against mighty and strong enemies. I do not doubt for a moment that——”

But Mr. Bigod had heard enough,—“Was ever such blasphemy heard? I wonder that the earth does not open. Such atheism exceeds all belief,”—and a hundred other charitable expressions of this nature passed the lips of the Rev. Gentleman.

Everard stared at the divine: smiled, and said nothing. The young Oxonian nudged the elbow of his father; Mr. Charnock thumped the table authoritatively: and Mr. Spalding cried “Whoop!”

In the mean time, the Honourable Clarence de Mowbray, M.P., who had been silent since the

commencement of this discussion, observed that, "for his part, he thought that Mr. Sinclair, having taken away nothing from the authenticity of the Bible, but, having added considerably to its value, by the discovery of an allegorical meaning in all the narrative portion of Holy Writ, was certainly less of an atheist than any other man in the room."

Mr. Bigod possessed the remarkable faculty of being able to hold his tongue. He made a point of not arguing with his betters; he only disputed with those to whom he might be uncivil with impunity.

The conversation took a different turn; but it soon came back again to the subject of religion. Mr. Bigod was declaiming loudly upon the superior efficacy of faith, affirming that good works were nothing, and that no one stood a chance of salvation, but the followers of the Church of England. The respective claims of faith and good works furnish much food for angry discussion between clergymen and laymen. No controversies are half so violent as religious controversies, and none ought to be carried on so meekly. Take it as a rule, gentle reader, that when people begin, after dinner, to discuss matters of religion, there will be some very serious altercation before they have left the table.

Mr. Bigod was evidently in the minority, which made him talk all the louder. The son coincided with the father, as, indeed, he was bound to do; besides, it was quite natural that one who had never done a "good work" in his life, should declare his faith in a theory, which he had made a point of always practically illustrating.

"Scripture upholds me," cried the zealous divine; "I am warranted in all that I say by passages of the Holy Book. I defy any gentleman present to point out a text of Scripture, wherein good works are preferred before faith."

Thus challenged, Everard Sinclair, who had been mildly advocating the cause of practical morality, quoted that most obvious text, "Faith, hope, and charity; but the greatest of these is charity."

"Ay, sir!" said the vicar; "but faith includes charity."

"Does it?" cried Everard; "then indeed the text which I have just quoted contains a strange mathematical contradiction. Faith includes charity, and yet charity is greater than faith; a part greater than the whole, which is impossible."

"Bravo, Sinclair!" cried Mr. Charnock, who loved a mathematical demonstration.

"There is no reasoning with an atheist!" exclaimed the confused vicar; for he had committed

himself so palpably, that he did not know how to extricate himself.

But the Oxonian winked at his father ; and then, turning to Everard, he said, " May I ask you, Mr. Sinclair, to define morality ? "

" I might give you a general definition," replied Everard ; " but it would be a long task, sir, to enter into a more specific account. "

" Is it morality to keep a mistress ? " cried the Oxonian, who was half drunk.

" Certainly not ! " replied Everard. " How can you ask such a question ? "

" I merely desired to know whether your theory agrees with your practice. It appears that they do not harmonize. "

" I don't understand you," said Everard.

" Or, rather, you won't understand me," rejoined the insolent collegian ; " you *pretend*, I believe, to be married ! "

The import of young Bigod's insinuations flashed across Everard's brain. He felt the full meaning of the taunt. It was the most gratuitous, unprovoked insult that ever had been uttered by man. Sinclair made no reply ; but, rising from his chair, he walked quietly to one corner of the room, where a double-thonged riding-whip was resting at the juncture of the walls, and, taking the flagellatory instrument in his hand, he strode up

Everard had not lost his temper. the duty of one man to inflict on another, it was the duty of Sinclair to resist. The Oxonian, like most other poor, sneaking coward; and had only insulted Everard, because he imagined his soft voice and the gentle countenance of his youth were indicative of a woman likely to offer resistance of any kind to inflict summary punishment.

“Hark you, Mr. Bigod!” cried Everard, “I have a young woman for my wife, a virtuous creature in the world; and you, with your ribald breath, dare to hint that she is a whore. Now, although such a slanderous course of conduct is beneath the notice of any honest man, although your villanous insinuations, if they in reality affect me, I feel called upon to call the community at large, to give you a lesson. Perhaps, sir, you will remember that reputations are not to be assaulted with impunity.”

scoundrel." And having said this, Everard Sinclair flung the trembling Oxonian from him; and, having bade adieu to the rest of the party, he walked tranquilly out of the room.

The whole assembly was of course in confusion. Mr. Charnock was very much scandalized that such an uproar should have happened in his house. Mr. Spalding rubbed his hands together and declared that "the boy had some spirit." The vicar, much alarmed for the safety of his son, insisted upon it that the squire, who (as I have before said) was a magistrate, should bind over the parties to keep the peace—a ceremony which, with the assistance of Mr. Littleton, was gone through on the following day: whilst Mr. Clarence de Mowbray declared, with a polite oath, that he would stand surety for Mr. Sinclair to any amount that might be named.

As for the young Oxford spark, who had paid so dearly for "roasting" our friend, in the first place, he was a good deal hurt; and in the second place, he was very much frightened: but he had no sooner heard his father talk about "binding over the parties" than, on a sudden, he became preposterously valiant, swearing that he would have satisfaction, "d—n him, if it cost him his life." Whereupon Mr. Bigod the elder, proceeded to deliver a lecture upon forbearance and the

blessedness of peacemakers, which his son declared to be "flummery, which was well enough for a clergyman, but which did not at all suit the fine feelings of a man of honour like himself." Oh! the shelter of the law is a prodigious stimulant to valour!

I need not follow up this story. Everard's enemies were many and strong. Mr. Littleton tried to persuade young Bigod to institute proceedings against my friend for assault and battery, next morning; but as the Oxoniam had by that time sent Sinclair a challenge, knowing that nothing would come of it, Mr. Judas Littleton withdrew in disappointment, and the parties were bound over to keep the peace.

But Eatonfield was no longer a fit place for Everard to reside in. His enemies tried every means in their power to exterminate him, but their efforts were unavailing, until, having discovered that the iron of their malice could not find its way to Everard's heart without passing through the body of another, they bethought themselves of a new and ingenious mode of persecuting their poor victim; they wreaked their vengeance upon all the Sinclairs' *protégés*; they poured evil upon the head of all in whose welfare the young couple were interested. It was death to a poor man for Everard to enter his dwelling. If either

of the Sinclairs were seen to pass the threshold of a pauper's cottage, the door was immediately *tabooed*, and certain ruin awaited the luckless inhabitants. What then could Everard do but seek for some other locality to be the sphere of his charitable actions?

CHAPT

Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel
Bear it that the opposer

Where both deliberate d
Who ever loved that love

I SLEPT that night at Eat
lowing morning, I made up
return straightway to Lon
ascertain the residence of r
division of the county, I re
pair to head-quarters, that

course which I had hitherto been withheld from adopting by certain scruples more delicate than wise.

I called at Cloddington Hall, which was not very many miles out of the direct route to London, and I ascertained that Mr. Sinclair had already taken his departure, having left word with his steward that the period of his absence was uncertain.

I then made directly for the metropolis. I had procured the address of Mr. Sinclair's lawyer; and from this gentleman I learned that his client had traced the lost one to Westmoreland, but that the result of his investigations was uncertain.

I resolved, therefore, to suspend my operations until I was enabled to consult Mr. Sinclair, and in the mean time I took up my quarters beneath the hospitable roof of my uncle.

I had not been many days in London, when a little event happened to me which, in some measure, diverted my attention from Everard Sinclair and his affairs, an event which it would be very unkind not to communicate to the inquisitive reader.

I went one night to Drury Lane Theatre; it was the first week of the season, and the house was remarkably full. Though I went unaccompanied by any party, I had secured for myself a seat

in one of the front tiers of the dress-circle, for Mr. Kean was to appear in *Lear*, and having seen the announcement in the papers, I had paid a visit to the Box-Office upon my first arrival from Devonshire.

In the next box to myself, and on the production of the same row, sat a middle-aged good-looking gentleman, in company with an elderly lady, and the prettiest young girl I had ever seen in my life. As the performances had commenced some time, when I entered the theatre, I proceeded immediately to the seat that I had engaged ; and as Kean, of whom I was an intense admirer, was at that moment upon the stage, I riveted my eyes immediately upon the actor, without so much as glancing round the house—my senses were absorbed in the scenical illusion—I saw only *Lear* and his daughters. It was nearly the conclusion of the first act, and the old king had just exclaimed, in his agony, before he curses his daughter, *Goneril* :—

“ Life and death ! I am ashamed
That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus.”

And I was straining forward to catch every syllable that was uttered, in an attitude of the most entire and wrapt attention, when I felt a hand touching me on the shoulder, whilst at the same time an

angry voice, proceeding from one close beside me, grated unpleasantly upon my ear, and destroyed, at once, the spell that had bound me.

“ Look you, sir,” said the speaker, whom I recognised, at once, to be a foreigner, though he spoke the language very correctly—“ Look you, sir, if you persist in annoying me, I shall speak to the police-officers of the theatre.”

I never was more astonished in my life : if I had heard one of the actors on the stage denounce me by name as a traitor, I could not have been more thunderstruck. I turned my head suddenly round, and perceived, after a momentary scrutiny, the manner in which I had given offence to the stranger.

He was seated at my right hand, between me and the stage, so that I could not have interrupted his view, however much I might have been inclined to lean forward. We were next to one another in the tier, but we were not in the same box, being sundered by what sailors would call a bulk-head, and landsmen, a partition. Now, it appears, that upon the cushion which runs along the top of this partition, like the coping-stone at the top of a revêtement, my right arm was resting in such a manner, that the left elbow of my neighbour was unable to adjust itself commodiously upon this spot of neutral ground. The gentleman

had as much right to make himself comfortable as I had ; but he certainly had no more, and as I had taken possession of the disputed territory, he had no business to attempt a dislodgement. However, so it was, that having given me a few admonitory *nudges*, which I did not in the least regard, because I was altogether unconscious of anything but the scenic representation, in which I was so wholly absorbed, the gentleman became exceedingly wrath, and finding that his hints were thrown away, he addressed me in the words which I have recorded, though I am altogether unable to describe the minacious irritability of his voice, and the portentous excitation of his gestures.

The only real cause of complaint which the foreign gentleman could, with propriety, urge against me, was the encroachment of a portion of my cloak, which had fallen from off my shoulder, and was hanging over into my neighbour's box. But when a man loses his temper he loses sight of propriety also.

I was so very much surprised that I hardly knew what to answer : I said something about " legitimate right," and without moving my arm, I turned my face again towards the stage.

When the act was over, and the drop-scene had fallen, I, in my turn, tapped my neighbour on the shoulder ; " Sir," said I, " your extraordinary con-

duct has astonished me more than I can express ; your attack upon me is the most unwarrantable that ever was made ; will you favour me by stepping outside your box ? it is customary to settle these differences in the lobby, and not in the presence of the audience. I have no wish to turn actor, or to take a part in a play-house disturbance ; there are mountebanks enough already, without my adding to the number. I repeat it, will you follow me to the lobby ?”

“ I shall do nothing of the kind,” replied the stranger, in a tone of mingled firmness and irritability, “ I have something better to do. I have ladies to look after. Besides,” he added, glancing at me contemptuously, “ I don’t know who you are, and I don’t care what are your customs.”

The insolent tone in which the stranger addressed me excited my choler abundantly. I replied in a low voice—low from extreme passion—and setting a marked emphasis upon particular words of my answer. “ Who I am, sir, you shall know soon enough. As for my customs, sir, they are the customs of Englishmen, and gentlemen—*which, of course, you know nothing about.*” And having said this I resumed my seat, placing my elbow firmly upon the contested resting-place, and fixing my eyes upon the countenance of my opponent.

The stranger turned away his head : and presently the curtain was up-drawn.

I did not attend very much to the presentation of the next act. I was labouring under violent excitement : I was boiling with the fiercest indignation. If I had not been in a public place I should have smitten the fellow, in my fury. Never in my whole life had I been so outrageously insulted,—and by one a stranger, a foreigner—a man who had numbered more than double the sum of my years ; and who, very probably, presuming upon his age, thought to brow-beat a stripling with impunity. I was infuriated ; but I was not *cowed*,—I said to myself—“ Yes ; I will extort an apology from that man : I will force him to give me satisfaction. He is protected from my violence now by the companionship of the ladies who attend him ; but I will follow the insulter to his house ; and beard him at his own threshold ;”—in short, I know not to what extent my meditations of vengeance did not lead me. I thought that a whole hecatomb could never appease my fury. I walked, in imagination, through an ocean of blood ; and fancied myself an Achilles or a Diomed.

In the meantime I began to scrutinize my adversary. To all appearance, he had moved on the earth about five and forty years ; he was tall and of a robust frame, with a remarkably intelligent

countenance, and a high, massive forehead, loaded with knotty protuberances. His hair, which was of a dark grey colour, was profuse and curly at the back of his head, though it had long since forgotten to adorn the crown and frontispiece of its master. He was not what a judge of the beautiful would exactly call a handsome man ; but his physiognomy was strikingly expressive, and indicated the character of a man open, manly, intrepid and generous ; but irresolute, impatient, and little given to wordy ceremony.

When the drop-curtain was again lowered, I stood up, and having extracted a card from one of the most beautiful Chinese cases that ever had crossed the Equator, I was about to present it to the stranger, with a request that he would return the compliment, when the individual, to my great astonishment, up-rising from his sedentary posture, addressed me in the following words :—" Sir, I was too intemperate. You must forgive the frailty of my temper. I have made a most unjust attack upon you ; and I am ready to acknowledge my error. Think that I am sufficiently punished in making this confession of my infirmity. *You* have behaved yourself, in this business, like a gentleman and a man of spirit ; *I* like a madman and a fool."

I was quite overpowered by this acknowledgment. The candour and condescension of the

stranger affected the sensibilities of my nature; and my emotion became apparent in the unwonted glistening of my eyes.

“Think not, sir,” I replied, “that I am less willing to forget, than you are to confess, your error. Sorry, indeed, am I that any conduct upon my part should have provoked this unpleasant altercation; but, I must say, in justice to myself, that nothing was further from my intentions, or altogether more foreign to my thoughts, than any uncourteous behaviour; for I am one, sir”—and here I went to Ben Jonson for assistance—“who dare as little to offer an injury as receive one.—But let the past be forgotten.”

“I believe you,” replied the stranger; “I believe you,—but more than this I feel a disposition to love you; there is that about you, which has won my affection;—may I hope that we may become acquainted”—and he put into my hand a card bearing his name and address.

I immediately did the same. The card which I had drawn from my pocket, with an hostile intent, was delivered as a pledge of amity—to a friend instead of to an enemy.

I read the superscription of the stranger's card—

MR. DE LAURIER,
—— *Street, Berkeley Square.*

but as the name was altogether unknown to me, it excited no particular sensations.

But not so with the address *I* had given. Mr. de Laurier, upon reading the printed characters, which syllabled the name of *Jerningham*, started, with a gesture of surprise; but the astonishment which he so manifestly exhibited, appeared to be of a grateful nature; and, presently, turning towards me, he exclaimed,—“*Jerningham!* can it be possible?—are you the nephew of Matthew Jerningham,—my excellent friend and benefactor? No; no: how can I ask the question?—for he has but *one* nephew in England, and”——but I interrupted the speaker.

“Indeed, sir, *I am* the nephew of one Mr. Matthew Jerningham; and I rejoice that you call him your friend,”—and then I proceeded to satisfy my new acquaintance of my identity, by telling him what had brought me to England.

Mr. de Laurier was delighted. He turned round to the young lady, who was seated on his right hand, and said, “Margaret, my love, this is Mr. Claude Jerningham,—the nephew of our kind friend—who has just returned from the Indies,”—and the sweetest voice I had ever heard in my life, replied,—“Indeed! dear father; you know the very name of *Jerningham* is enough to secure my good-will.”

I have as yet only cursorily alluded to the companions of my new friend. I have said, that an elderly lady and a young maiden sate beside Mr. de Laurier. Of the former I shall say little, but that she was a distant female relative of the gentleman's, and, upon this occasion, was acting the *chaperon*. But Margaret,—oh ! what shall I say of this beautiful young creature ?—When I turned to scrutinize her father, my eye fell upon her for the first time, and she was then endeavouring to pacify the fury of her choleric sire ; grasping one of his hands, and looking up beseechingly into his face, with a countenance more expressive than words, and an unshed tear upon either eye, which still hung upon the delicate lashes, and seemed unwilling to depart from the trammels of such sweet bondage. But this sight did not soften my heart, though I bowed before the loveliness of the maiden ; for I said to myself, “ I will do nothing unbecoming the character of a man in the presence of such an angel as this. No ; she may hate me for my impetuosity, but she shall not despise me for my pusillanimity.”

It was a beautiful thing to see the up-turned face and beseeching attitude of sweet Margaret de Laurier. She scarcely articulated a word ; but the pressing hand, the tearful, supplicating eye, and the half-opened mouth with its projecting lips, said

plainly as the tongue could speak,—“Father, my dear father, thou art very rash and intemperate. Those rebel passions of thine mislead thee. Be calm, and then thou wilt be sorry.” *Beati Pacifici!* sweet girl; and, be thou blessed indeed, for thou wert the peace-maker between thy father and myself!

If ever there was a beautiful face in the world it was the face of Margaret de Laurier. If ever genius and love,—twin offsprings of sensibility,—were characterized upon the human countenance, they were characterized upon Margaret de Laurier's. Sappho was *not* beautiful, or I should have produced that impassioned Lesbian as the archetype of the sweet creature, whose beauty I am seeking images to describe. She was like a young Pithoness, in one of her gentler moods, when the frenzy and the agony were not on her. Her face was so full of soul, and of such an ever-varying aspect, that she looked like an inspired maiden, forgetful of her mortal birth. If I outstep “the modesty of nature,” I must be forgiven, for I would rather write extravagantly than tamely of such a being as Margaret de Laurier. The spirit of poetry and of love breathed in her impassioned countenance. She turned her face towards the stage; and she was, with Cordelia, in the sick-chamber. She wept for the bereaved monarch; the tears “trilled down

her delicate cheek :” she was full of sympathy with the mimic sufferers ; she forgot that their woes were unreal ; she forgot that she was in a crowded theatre. She did not see Mr. Kean and Miss —— ; she beheld only Lear and his daughter. She bent her neck forward, and she fixed her large hazel eyes intently upon the face of the King. It was the finest tribute to theatrical excellence that can be imagined ; it was real sorrow caught from the counterfeit agony. The blue veins of her neck and forehead distended themselves, and her bosom heaved, and her lips were pressed together, as though she were struggling to control her emotion. How beautiful she looked ! The ever-changing hue of her cheeks ; the strongly-marked frontal vein, so indicative of genius and goodness, which was traced, in an azure line, upon the exquisite whiteness of her brow ; the dark brown luxurious hair, confined with a golden fillet, and thrown back in such a manner as not to mar the oval of her face,—what a picture of eloquent distress,—

Sorrow would be a rarity most beloved,
If all could so become it.

I speak of sorrow : I ought to use another word ; for Margaret de Laurier would not have exchanged those violent emotions of sympathy, which the unreal suffering before her had excited in her tender breast—she would not have exchanged the thrill-

ling, yet pleasant, agony of an highly-distended imagination, for any gentler delights—for any more serene enjoyment. She wished for no softer music. She was happy in the excitement of her feelings. For Margaret de Laurier was a poetess; in Italy she would have been an Improvisatrice.

At one time I thought that she was about to be seized with an hysterical affection. It was when Lear, awakening from his slumber, recognizes his daughter, Cordelia. The whole scene is so exceedingly touching that it might bring the rheum into sterner eyes than those of Margaret de Laurier; but when they came to that passage, where the old Monarch exclaims half-doubtingly

—————“Do not laugh at me,
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia;”

And the daughter, with a heart so full that she scarcely can mould her rushing feelings into articulate words, throws herself at the feet of her father, crying out with a choaking voice,

“And so I am—I am—”

Margaret bowed her head, and buried her face in her hands, whilst the tears came gushingly from between her fingers, and an audible sob which she could not suppress, smote upon the ears of all around her, and told how much she was moved.

When the tragedy was ended, Mr. de Laurier and his party rose immediately to depart:—"I don't know, Mr. Jerningham," said he, "whether you remain to witness farces or pantomimes; but neither my daughter nor myself can relish such poor inanities, after the noble acting we have just seen,—it would be like drinking *vin ordinaire* after that 'king of all wines,' Monte-pulciano. But, however, if you are inclined to depart, there is a seat in my carriage for you, and I dare say when we reach home that we shall find a *petit souper* awaiting us. Will it please you to join our party?"

I need not say how readily I accepted the invitation. I gave Margaret my arm, and we proceeded along the lobby and down the stairs. Margaret said nothing; indeed, I did not wish that she should speak; for I could not have answered her, if she *had* spoken.

We entered the carriage; there were four of us, and I sat beside Margaret. The coachman was ordered, in the first instance, to set down the elderly lady, who made up our *quartetto*, and this part of the business having been performed, the word of command was—*Home*.

As the carriage proceeded westward, Mr. de Laurier asked me a multitude of questions, concerning my sojourn in India,—a subject which, of

all others, I most hated to touch upon ; but Margaret was very silent ; she only opened her lips once, and then she articulated a sentence, full of meaning, which, at the time, I did not comprehend ; but the real import of which, I was subsequently made thoroughly acquainted with. "Mr. Jerningham," said she, "have you ever visited Italy ? "

We arrived at Mr. de Laurier's dwelling. It was a good house, in a good street, and in a good situation. When I entered, every thing about me bespoke the refinement of its inhabitants ; but there was nothing in it indicative of wealth. You would have said, "This is the house of a man, who has a moderate income, but a fine taste. There is more mind than money here."

I sat down to partake of the slight repast that had been provided for us. Margaret very soon rose, with a thousand apologies, to depart. Indeed, she was in no state to bear the presence of any person, much less that of a stranger, like myself. But there was so much courtesy and kindness in the language, wherein she excused herself, that I felt more flattered than annoyed by the suddenness of Margaret's departure. She extended her hand to me, and she said in a cordial tone—"I am a poor fool, Mr. Jerningham ; but Shakspeare and Kean, together, unnerve me for the rest of the even-

ing; but I hope to see you some day, when I can be more like a rational woman."—I did not stay long after this.

My uncle's house was not very far off. I ran, or rather *skipped* along the streets. When I entered Matthew Jerningham's library, he congratulated me upon the briskness of my demeanour. "Well, Claude," he said, "what now, my boy? I am sure something has befallen you; for I have not seen you in such high spirits since the first evening of your arrival. Why, bless me! my dear boy, you have not found your friend, Everard Sinclair, in the saloon of Drury Lane Theatre?"

God forgive the wickedness of my reply, for I cried out, "D—n Everard Sinclair!"

"How now, Claude?" said my uncle, "d—ning your friend Sinclair! what on earth has befallen the boy?"

"Pardon me, my dear uncle, I did not at all mean what I said,—but do *you* know Mr. de Laurier?"

"*Miss* de Laurier, you mean,—do I know Margaret de Laurier? Yes, Claude, I am happy to say that I know both the daughter and her sire."

"Well, uncle, and who are they?"

"Who are they?—why, father and daughter, —but first tell me how you became acquainted

with them, and then I will indulge *your* curiosity."

I related all that had happened, and my uncle laughed heartily. "Well, Claude, there is no hope for you, if you have once seen Margaret de Laurier. But now I will redeem my promise; so, in the first place, seat yourself down in that easy chair; and, in the second, pour yourself out a tumbler of this Curaçao punch,—capital stuff it is, Claude,—made after ——'s receipt."

I obeyed the injunctions of my uncle; and Mr. Matthew Jerningham proceeded,—“Your story amuses me mightily—you have behaved yourself like a hero of romance,—threatened to shoot the father and fallen in love with the daughter,—a new mode of introducing one's-self to a young lady, certainly,—but one which shows some knowledge of the sex.”

“‘No scandal about Queen Elizabeth,’ my dear uncle,” said I.

“Well, then—(your punch will get cold: have the goodness to ring the bell, and we will have an anchovy toast)—Mr. de Laurier is an Italian gentleman; I believe that his name was De Laurio, and that he is a count or a prince in his own country; but since he has sojourned in ours, which is now some eighteen years, he has anglicized himself completely, and has had the sense to doff his

title, thinking that in Great Britain the character of an English gentleman is more respectable and less equivocal than that of a foreign noble. He is, I imagine, a Neapolitan; but having united himself to an English lady, he quitted his own sunny clime for our less genial island, and has never, by one visit to his country, interrupted the monotony of his exile. Connected with this there is a romantic story. The mother of Margaret de Laurier was travelling in Italy for the benefit of her health; she was consumptive, and the family physician had recommended the pure air of Tuscany as the most likely to strengthen her lungs. Thither, therefore, Miss Charlton repaired, attended by both her parents, for they doated on their daughter most entirely, and she was an only child. They visited Rome, and Florence, and Geneva; at last they settled at Naples: there Mr. Charlton was attacked by a virulent infectious fever; he died; Mrs. Charlton died, and Emily was left alone in the world—not alone, for she had many friends—but an orphan, unhappy and disconsolate. Mr. Charlton, upon his death-bed, anxious that his poor daughter should continue to dwell in Italy, had appointed an English resident at Naples, with whom he was upon terms of the closest friendship, sole guardian of Emily; for the girl was not of age, and she was heiress to con-

siderable property. Well, Claude—(you don't drink your punch, that tumbler must be quite cold; fill again in another glass)—when residing beneath the roof of her guardian, she became acquainted with Count de Laurio, a young nobleman of a very excellent family, and a reputation which never had been sullied, or even breathed upon, since the hour of his birth. He courted, and in process of time was accepted by Emily Charlton.—(You may light your cigar, Claude; I don't mind it in the library; besides, it's good for the books). They were married, and a daughter was born unto them—sweet Margaret de Laurier—(Come, boy, drink to her health, and I'll join you in the toast—'Sweet Margaret de Laurier, and a husband worthy of her,' eh! Claude?) Soon after, the mother died; there is a mystery about her death. She did not die of consumption, for after her marriage she grew comparatively strong; but 'tis said that she died *mad*; though I will not vouch for the truth of this rumour. However, you must not think that any blame was attached to her husband; for, on the contrary, he was the most affectionate consort in the world, and was severely stricken by the death of his wife. I believe that there was madness in the Charlton family—(why, deuce take it, Claude! you are putting your cigar-ashes in your punch! My story

seems to interest you mightily.) Well, boy, upon her death-bed,—it matters not whether she was insane or not,—but she certainly did not exhibit her insanity in this last crowning act of her life.” (My uncle was a profound patriot, and he loved every now and then, to take a good-natured fling at a foreigner, although he was the first always to assist, or to protect, one by his exertions.) “She called the count to her bed-side, and in an impassioned voice, she exclaimed, ‘De Laurio, I have a boon to ask. It is my last, for I am a dying woman. By the love you bear me—by your hope in heaven—by all that is most sacred in this world and in the next, *swear*, that within three months of my burial, you will take that infant child, who now, cradled in innocence, sleeps so sweetly by my side, to England, and suffer her not to depart thence until she be arrived at womanhood and—*married*. I will not impose exile upon you; but the choice is between your country and your child. Will you swear?’

“The count hesitated. ‘Stay!’ continued the dying woman; ‘it is fitting that you should know the reason of my request. You have a right to demand this; and you shall be answered. Listen, De Laurio! You are an Italian; *your* country is *mine*; and I would not willingly rail against it; but this is not the hour when the voice of duty

should be hushed because delicacy whispers it to be silent. I would not that a daughter of mine should be educated in this country:—need I say any more, De Laurio? This sentence includes all that it is necessary to say on the subject. I owe much to the climate of Italy; several years of life, and *one* year of your society, my husband; but custom, example, intercourse' — and as she said this she grew very faint, and thinking that her hour was nigh, she checked herself, and, with a last effort, cried, 'De Laurio! will you *swear*?'

“‘I will! I will!’ cried the count, and he bent down to kiss his wife; but there was no motion in her lips; they answered not to his;—she was dead! But De Laurio kept his vow,—the vow which he made to the corpse.—There, Claude, there's a romance for you. I have given the story, as nearly as I can remember it, in De Laurio's own words. And now, my boy, you are thoroughly acquainted with the birth, parentage, and education of *La Belle Marguerite*.—By the bye, I forgot to show you the quarto copy of *Boswell* I have bought, with Edmund Malone's notes, and several MSS. of the Doctor's inserted.”

“But, uncle, I must be allowed to cross-examine you. In the first place, may I ask what was *your* introduction to the De Lauriers. They spoke of you as their friend and benefactor, declaring that

There!—what do you think of my

“You will not tell me then, looking beseechingly into Matthe face.

“Certainly, Claude, I will, if it the least satisfaction. De Laur upon business; our first acquaint professional nature. It happened tives of his deceased wife contes possession to her estates. De I laid the case before me, and it shameless conspiracy against the exerted all my energies to proc fortunately enough, I succeeded.’

“Pardon me, uncle,” I said, ‘you have withheld something.] of the world to speak of a law; you from beggary, or of a physic you from death, as a benefactor eternally beholden. Such ben forgotten as soon as they are

way of these foreigners. The Italians are proverbially hyperbolic in their figures of speech. You must not judge their expressions of gratitude by the standard of our phlegmatic countrymen."

"An ingenious answer enough, uncle; but I must still continue to act the inquisitor. I am not satisfied with your evasion, though I understand what is the cause of it."

"Well, Claude, I suppose that I must tell you. Palpable as were De Laurier's rights to the eye of reason and benevolence, they were by no means palpable to the eye of the law; and it was no easy matter to establish the justice of his claims. Lawyers have an admirable mode of eating the kernel of the nut and giving the shells to their clients; and in this case of the Charlton property, very considerable expenses were incurred by my client, for the suit was both long and intricate. However, it was a 'labour of love' to me; for I was protecting the rights of an injured foreigner, upon whose ignorance of our laws and customs, some wicked fellow-countrymen of ours were exerting all their powers to impose. Besides, during the progress of the cause, I conceived a great partiality for De Laurier, and had every reason to admire the independent manliness of his character; for though he is a hot-headed, impetuous fellow, he has some admirable good qualities. Well,

Claude, not to make a long story of this, we triumphed. And De Laurier came to me, with a heart overflowing with gratitude, and mouth full of 'expenses,' and other words of similar import, declaring that he could not understand the explanations of the attorney who had acted with me, and so on. Upon which I interrupted his volubility, and asked whether he was going to act the part of Mark Antony's Fulvia, who pierced, with a *golden bodkin*, the tongue of Cicero, the orator. Whereupon, as indeed I had anticipated, he flew into a violent passion, swearing that he would be pensioner upon no man's bounty, and asking whether I intended to insult him. But I told him that I had already been remunerated a thousand times over; but that if he wished to pay me any further, I would take no other coin but his friendship, which was more precious to me than all the gold in the world.—So this is the mighty business which you were so anxious to investigate. Have you any more questions to ask, for I hear it striking one, and"—

"Yes, uncle;" I interrupted. "Mr. De Laurier is not very rich, I should imagine, by the style in which he lives. Do you know what is his income? How many rupees a month?"

"Upon my word," cried my uncle, laughing, "you propose a question which demands some

calculation, to answer in the numerals of your Indian currency. But if I tell you that he is possessed of about fifteen hundred a-year, you will be able to reduce the sum to its equivalent in rupees. Are you beginning to think already about the *dowry*, my dear boy? Remember one thing, however, that your brother has been at De Laurier's before you."

"My brother!—a thousand devils!" I exclaimed; for there was madness in the very thought.

"I don't think, however, that he has made much impression," said my uncle, as he lighted his taper.—"*Mais nous verrons, mon fils.* Good night, Claude."

CHAPTER V.

Sir, be comforted ;
We have our manly virtues given us,
To exercise in such extremes as these.

SHIRLEY.

I HAD promised Mr. De Laurier that I would pay him a visit on the following day. Margaret had also expressed a wish to see me "before very long;" and, although I had not the vanity to look upon the request as any thing more than a manifestation of courtesy, I remembered the words that she had uttered with the pleasantest emotions in the world, and I determined to do all that I could to render myself agreeable in her sight.

I am not one of those who "take sound counsel of their pillow not to rise until they hear it ring noon;" and, at the season of which I am now writing, I was an earlier riser than I am at present, because I had not as yet shaken off the tenacity of my Indian habits. Before eleven o'clock, on the

morning after my adventures at the theatre, I had wandered into the neighbourhood of the Temple, very diligently employed upon a *book-hunt*.

"Perhaps I may succeed here," said I, as I strolled into a shop, situated in a narrow street contiguous to Chancery-lane.

I had been looking for the first folio edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays,—the edition of 1647, which Shirley superintended and prefaced.

"I think, sir, that this is the book you are in search of," said the shopkeeper, with an air of satisfaction, as he brought down the work from a front shelf, and displayed it most ostentatiously upon the counter; "and I may say that I am fortunate, in being able to serve you, too, sir; for there is a great demand, just now, for these old plays, in the market. The copy, which you see now, sir, has passed more than once through my hands. It was the property of the late John Kemble, the tragedian."—And then he charged me a sum which far exceeded the value of the book.

I made some demur at what I considered a most flagitious demand, for a not very fine copy of a not very scarce book.

But the man was up to his profession, and replied,—“Indeed, sir, I am offering you a bargain. The marginal annotations alone are worth double

the money; and these, sir, are undoubted originals,—autographs of great value in themselves, besides the fund of dramatic knowledge they contain, fit for a new edition, sir.”

“You will allow me, perhaps,” said I, “to form my own opinion upon this subject;” and, turning over the leaves of the book, I glanced at the notes in the margin, when, just as I had arrived at a conclusion that criticisms, such as I was then reading, would be dearly purchased at any price, they being, most assuredly, the work of some tasteless annotator, hired for the purpose, a maid-servant came running in hastily, at the back door, and informed her master, that the gentleman who lodged up-stairs had been seized with a fit of convulsions, and appeared likely to take his departure for another world, if medical aid was not immediately brought to the assistance of the invalid.

“Run, Betsey, run! then,” cried the bookseller, “to No. —, and tell Mr. R——, either to come himself immediately, or to send somebody to see the gentleman;”—and then, turning to me, he continued, “I should be mighty sorry, sir, if any thing serious were to happen, because he is a most excellent lodger; so very kind and obliging to us in the shop below, and a wonderful learned gentleman,——”

“Stop, Mr. ——,” I exclaimed, interrupting the voluble bookseller; for a sudden idea entered my brain that his lodger *might be* Everard Sinclair. — “Will you tell me the gentleman’s name? I have an especial reason for inquiring.”


“Why, sir,” replied the bibliopole, with a sagacious expression of countenance, “I cannot exactly tell you the real name of the gentleman, for there be something about this which I do not know how to make out; but—”

“Stay,” I cried, for my suspicions were confirmed by the uncertain announcement of the bibliopole; “is he a young married man, with a wife, and an infant daughter?”

“Lord, bless you, —no, sir!” replied the bookseller, “he be as old as other people, and either a bachelor or a widower, for he has no lady with him; — I hope that jade Betsy has not stopped to chatter by the way.”

“But can we do nothing for the poor gentleman in the meantime? — can we render him no assistance before your servant returns with the doctor?”

“Oh, dear! no, sir, — none whatever, I assure you; for Mr. R—— says, that when the fits come upon him, he is best left to himself, because he fancies all manner of things, if he sees a strange face in the room. He seems to have a baddish conscience, and yet he is a pious gentleman

enough; for it was but the other day that he bought Clarke's bible from me, in Russia, folio, plates, and a most beautiful copy, perfect, without a soil, good as new, and yet cheap as waste paper. I bought it at the sale of the late primate's effects, and the Bishop of ——, who was bidding against me, said, when the lot was knocked down, — it was lot 95 in the catalogue; — ‘ Mr. ——,  congratulate, though I envy, you; you have made ——’ ”

But as I was very little interested in the sayings of the bishop, or the bargains of the bookseller, but very much so in the condition of the sick gentleman upstairs, I interrupted my loquacious friend, by inquiring the name of his lodger, and asking how long the unfortunate man had occupied the chambers he was then residing in.

“ Why, I can't boast much of my memory,” replied the bibliopole, “ but as far as I can remember, he has been with us a twelve-month come Michaelmas, and this, sir, is the 10th of September. My last lodger was an over-bad gentleman; indeed, sir, he was no gentleman at all, for he used to bring all manner of company into my house, — he did; and when I told him that I kept neither a pot-house, nor a brothel, he called me an impertinent rascal, and kicked me, sir, in my own shop. I knew my place better than to retort,

shop; but the British lion was roused in my bosom, and I —”

“Gave him notice to quit. Very good, Mr. —; indeed you were quite right; but I was not asking about your *last* lodger; my question related more immediately to the present one. Will it please you to tell me his name?”

“Oh! dear, sir, yes,” replied the bookseller; “I beg your pardon for being so long, but my tongue runs away with me, at times. The gentleman who lodges upstairs, calls himself *Mr. Delaval*, — but I think, sir, that be only the name under which he hangs out. Yet, for all that, he is the very moral of a gentleman.”

Delaval! — the announcement of this name stimulated, to the highest degree, the curiosity which had already been awakened by the bookseller’s account of his lodger. Could “the gentleman upstairs” be indeed that inscrutable being who had so mystified me, when, an inquisitive school-boy, I had attempted to fathom his character? — Could this be indeed he, the usher of Dr. R—, the friend of Lord Leicester, now living, nay, perhaps dying, in obscurity, unknown, and unforgotten? — I asked myself this question, and my answer was, “Yes, it may be;” but I determined, at once, to ascertain the truth or the fallaciousness of my suspicions.

I proceeded to interrogate the bibliopole; but in order that he might conceal nothing from me, I thought that it would be prudent, in the first instance, to apply a little *golden ointment* to his tongue. "You will have the goodness, Mr. —, to send me that 'Beaumont and Fletcher;' you are already acquainted with my address."

The bookseller bowed his acquiescence.

"And I dare say," continued I, "that I shall have occasion before I leave the shop to make sundry other purchases," (the bookseller's countenance brightened up,) "I will look around your shelves presently. By the bye, what did you say was the name of the gentleman upstairs?"

"He calls himself Mr. Delaval," replied the obsequious shopkeeper; "but I think that he holds out under false colours, sir."

"And why do you think that, Mr. —? Have you got a copy of the *Arcadia*?"

"Yes, sir, and a very fine copy too—first edition, with Lord Brooke's autograph. Shall I show it to you, Mr. — *Jerningham*? I believe, sir, you are the son of Mr. Jerningham, of — street? Your honourable father, Mr. Jerningham, is one of my best customers."

"Mr. Jerningham is my uncle, and I will look at the *Arcadia* presently. In the mean time you were about to tell me your reasons for suspecting

the legitimate right of your lodger to the name of—*Delaval*, was it not?”

“Why, sir,” replied the bibliopole, “the fact of the matter is this,—and yet I hardly know that I ought to meddle with what does not concern me; the secrets of my lodger should be my own, but to you, Mr. Jerningham, who are such a good customer, I may venture to——”

“Oh, certainly! I applaud the justness of your sentiments, Mr. ——, but have the goodness to go on.”

“Well, sir, I was about to remark, I have very strong grounds for my suspicions, for not very long after the gentleman had taken up his abode in my house, Mr. Jerningham, a smart cabriolet, with a foot-boy behind it, came dashing up to the house, and a handsome young gentleman got out of it, as I thought, to make a purchase; but guess what was my disappointment, when he asked me if a Mr. ——, (on my life, I forget the name he inquired for,) was lodging in my house, and when I told him that a gentleman who called himself *Delaval* was upstairs, his lordship, for I found he *was* a lord, replied that it was all one, and begged to be shewn up to Mr. *Delaval* immediately.”

My suspicions were so much corroborated by this intelligence, that I no longer doubted the identity of the *Delaval* in the bookseller's lodg-

ings with the Delaval of Dr. R—'s school. The young lord, beyond all question, was no other than my friend Leicester. But I continued to interrogate Mr. ——. "And who may this stranger have been?"

"Why *that*, sir, I could never discover; I heard the foot-boy address him as 'my lord,' and then, next day, I endeavoured to pump Mr. Delaval, but I made nothing out of him at all: I don't think, whoever he may have been, that his visit was very agreeable to my lodger, for he was up almost all that night, striding backward and forward in his chamber, and the next morning he was taken ill, sir, and Betsy, (that is, my maid, for my wife's name is Betsy also,) declared that the gentleman's bed had not been slept on at all that night."

"But did you see nothing," I asked, "of his lordship after this?"

"Oh, dear! no, sir,—nothing at all. I never saw him again, nor has Mr. Delaval had a single visitor since that day, barring a strange-looking gentleman in black, whom I take, sir, to be a clergyman, and who comes now and then, of an evening to spend a short time with my lodger. But he, sir, be gone away now, for I have not seen him this month past."

"And what aged man may he be?"

"I beg your pardon, sir, the stranger or Mr. Delaval?"

"The latter."

"I can scarcely inform you," replied the shopkeeper "with any exactness or nicety, for sometimes he appears younger than at other times. But I cannot be far wrong, when I say between forty and fifty—yet nearer forty than fifty, though, to be sure, I may be out in my reckoning."

"And his person?"

"He is tall and thin, but not badly made by any means; he has an high forehead, black hair, and large hazel eyes; I should say, that he had been handsome when young, but sickness is no friend to beauty, and Mr. Delaval has had a world of suffering."

By this time the medical gentleman had rendered all the assistance in his power to the invalid, and he entered the shop to report that the sick man was now comparatively at his ease—that the fit had been over some time, and that he (the doctor) having taken from his patient a few ounces of blood, had left him in a state of tranquillity, which was symptomatic of an improved condition.

I called the surgeon aside, and telling him that I was a friend of his patient's, asked permission to visit the invalid, not very much expecting, I must :

confess, that the permission would be so readily ceded to me.

“ By all means,” cried the medical gentleman, “ the presence of a friend may comfort him ; for, if I mistake not, the gentleman’s malady is more of the mind than of the body.”

I requested the bookseller, without loss of time, to show me the way to the apartment of his lodger: the man stared, and looked inquiringly at the apothecary, who nodded his head in token of acquiescence, and put the scruples of the shop-keeper to flight.

The bookseller tapped gently at the door of the sick-chamber, and the invalid, apparently identifying this mild application for admittance, called out in a feeble tone, “ You may come in Mr. ——”

The bibliopole entered the apartment of his lodger, to apprise him of my intended visit, and presently I heard a voice—a well-known voice, saying, “ Tell Mr. Jerningham I will see him. It matters not who comes to me now.” So straightway I entered the apartment.

Upon a large tent-bed, the curtains of which had been thrown back, covered only with a single sheet, his head resting upon his right arm, the elbow of which was on his pillow, his left arm lying by his side, bandaged and bleeding from the effects of recent venesection, his pale face turned towards the

door in expectation of my forewarned appearance, wan as a spectre, and scarcely more real in substance, lay the *ci-devant* usher of Dr. R——, the strange—the unfathomable Delaval.

There was an air of comfort and cleanliness about the room, which said much in favour of the landlord. It was even cheerful in its appearance, —unpleasingly cheerful in my eyes, for there was that about it which seemed to smile in mockery of its suffering inhabitant. But, more than all, there was a degree of taste, visible throughout the apartment, which, I knew, could have emanated only from the cultivated mind of the tenant. In the nice arrangement of the furniture,—in the disposition of the many books and instruments, which were seen in all parts of the room,—in the undoubted originality of the few old pictures, evidently not the property of the lodging-keeper, which ornamented the walls of the chamber,—there was a striking manifestation of *mind*,—mind of no second-rate order. It was one of those beautiful English autumn days, the charms of which are not to be obliterated by the smoke and confinement of a metropolis,—and the window had been thrown open, and the bright sun, now nearly at its height, came glancing into the room, and there was a long green box of mignonette, which stretched itself out on the window-ledge; and a

bunch of fresh flowers in a handsome vase on the table; and really you might have thought yourself in the country, but for the long, dingy, formal row of black houses, which appeared upon the other side of the street, and shut out every glimpse of prospect from the sight of the disappointed beholder.

There was a chair by the bed-side of the sufferer, and Delaval motioned to me to be seated. He held out his thin, bony hand, and the feeble pressure of his fingers, which was intended for a cordial grasp, bespoke, with alarming certainty, the sad debility of the invalid. But there was no trembling,—no involuntary motion: on the contrary, enervated as he was, there was a firmness in his muscular action,—a tranquillity and decision in his weakness, which I had not anticipated, and which surprised me. I expected that my appearance would have agitated him; but whatever may have been stirring within, externally he was very calm. I never in my whole life had seen him so thoroughly composed.

“Well, Jerningham,” said the sick man,—“so, you have found out at last the haunts of your old preceptor. May I ask to what accident I am indebted for this visit?—but at all events I am happy to see you. The time was, when I might have wished you away,—but *now*,—now, at least,

you are welcome to my chamber, the chamber as it soon will be of the *dead*."

I told him of all that had passed in the book-seller's shop below, disclaiming any premeditated intention of intruding upon him, and protesting that my discovery of his residence was purely and entirely accidental. There was a pause; I was too deeply affected to utter another word.

The sick man was the first to break the silence. "Jerningham, do not think that I, in any measure, desire your absence: you look with a kind face upon my afflictions, and you speak in a kind voice,—believe me, I should wish, before I die, the blessing of a few kind words. Yes; Jerningham, I am a dying man; it is of no use to tell me that I am not. I feel it here,—in my heart do I feel death coming. Hark! do you not hear it beating? —*Look*, then; look Jerningham? are not those strenuous vibrations?"—I *did* look; and the whole frame-work of his bed was shaking; the pulsations of the sick man's heart made it quiver like a leaf in the wind. "Yes, Jerningham," continued my companion,—“you may well be silent now. My days are numbered; but what of that!—a few years more or less in this world of suffering, what matters it? The old soldier, in the play, has philosophised with some wisdom,

'Tis but to die,—dogs do it, ducks with dabbling.
 Birds sing away their souls, and babies sleep 'em ;
 Why do I talk of that is treble vantage ?*

There was a time when I should have looked upon death as an evil ; *then* I had much to do ; but now,—τετελεσται, it is finished,—my work is done ; and I am ready." Then, suddenly checking himself, he asked, "Have you seen Leicester of late?—Lord Leicester,—I beg his Lordship's pardon ;" and a forced smile played upon his lips.

"Oh ! yes, Mr. Delaval ; I saw him but a few weeks ago,"—and then I alluded cursorily to our midnight revels at Stonehenge.

"It is well," cried the sick man, earnestly,—and then, as if suddenly recollecting himself,—"did he say any thing about *me*?"

"I asked him if he knew your abode, and he said, that you were probably upon the Continent ; but that he had not seen you for some time, and did not know where you were residing."

"Did he say that?" exclaimed Delaval, in a sorrowful tone of voice. "Poor Leicester ! God forgive thy frailties, for assuredly they are many and great.—Jerningham, our connexion at school used to mystify you ; I know it did. You have come opportunely ; but for this meeting you would have died in ignorance of my story. As it is, I

* Beaumont and Fletcher's *Mad Lover*.

have long been seeking a confidant,—I wish to unburthen myself; but not now; another day, come to me, and you shall learn my secret.”

“Secret! what secret?” I asked, with an hypocritical affectation of surprise.

“Nonsense!—you know well enough that there is a secret, Jerningham. You took me for an inexplicable being; I am still one; you are lost in wonder. I must help you to unravel the mystery, for you will never do it unaided, I am sure.”

“Mr. Delaval, I am proud of your confidence.”

“Nay; there is no confidence; why need a dying man be silent; why carry his secrets with him to the grave? My history may be a warning to you; and I look upon posthumous reputation as indeed the vainest of vanities. I am going,—oh God! Jerningham, I know not whither I am going. ‘In my father’s house there are many mansions.’ May not one of them be opened to me?”

“Oh, Delaval!” I cried, “hope is forbidden unto none; and thou, I am sure, needest not despair.”

“Wait till you have heard my story, and then you will judge otherwise. Jerningham, you may remember the time when you—or some of your school-fellows—were pleased to consider me an atheist. *Would that I had been one!* When a

man wishes that he could urge infidelity as an excuse for the evil he has committed, how fearfully conditioned he must be. But *I*”—then he broke off suddenly and resumed—“ I am growing foolish. You had better leave me for the present. This day se’nnight I shall be ready for you ; then, methinks, dissolution will be nigh. But hark you, in the mean time keep your peace, and say nothing of the meeting which has been between us. If I feel the hand of death to be on me before the hour I have appointed for your coming, I will write to you. Come, when ’tis dark. Now, farewell, until we meet again. Depend upon it, that I will not disappoint you.”

I shook him by the hand ; and was departing, when the sick man recalled me, saying, “ You used to be an admirer of Shakspeare. Before you visit my lodging again, read *Lear*—and attentively. It will help you to understand some portions of my history ; and, now again, Jerningham, adieu.”

But I tarried to ask a question—“ Mr. Delaval, you remember Sinclair. Have you seen him since he left school ?—or can you acquaint me with the abode of my friend ?”

“ Alas ! no,” replied the sick man ; “ I thought of asking you the same question, but somehow it escaped my memory. I should like to see *him*

before I die. If the world has not spoiled him utterly—if the man be not far different from the boy—young Sinclair is the creature above all others, in whose arms I should like to breathe out my soul. What a sweet spirit was that boy's—how gentle, how quiet, yet how brave!" Delaval was silent, and I went my way. I could not speak, for my heart was full.

I was constrained to pass through the shop, or I would fain have avoided its locality. The bookseller impeded my progress to ask me whether I would purchase the *Arcadia*, with Lord Brooke's autograph, and a MS. note by Ben. Jonson, which he (the bibliopole) had discovered, *i.e.* forged, whilst I was talking with his lodger."

"Yes; certainly—by all means—I am in a hurry; send them home, and be d—d to you."

The bookseller stared; and I rushed into the street. I made my way to my uncle's house as fast as a pedestrian could go; for I hate those modern abominations, called hackney-coaches and cabs. Arrived at home, I ordered that the saddle-horses should immediately be held in readiness, whilst I ascended to my chamber for the purpose of arranging my toilet. My mind was distracted between hope and memory; I knew not whether to look forward to my coming meeting with Margaret de Laurier, or retrospectively to my in-

terview with Delaval. However, by the time that I had ridden to * * * street, I had come to the wise determination of dismissing the usher from my thoughts entirely for the next two hours.

My visit to the De Lauriers was a very agreeable one ; but as the *Signor* was present during the whole time of my sojourn, the conversation was of a desultory nature, and scarcely worth recording in these pages. But, nevertheless, I quitted the house abominably in love with Margaret, and if I made no impression upon her, it was not for want of trying.

CHAPTER VI.

'Tis too true, oh ! my fortune,
That I must equally be bound to either.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

Most impious epicures !

* * * * *
You that are wound up to the height of feeding
By clime and custom, are dispensed withall.

MIDDLETON.

THE next morning I had a bad headache ; so I resolved that I would be quiet all the day. Uncle Matthew had gone to St. Stephens' to attend a committee of the House of Commons, so I ensconced myself in his library, attired in a *robe de chambre*, made out of a Cachemere shawl ; and a pair of Oriental slippers, which had a very *distingué* appearance.

I stretched myself out on a sofa, and sighed for my friendly *hookah*—the only appurtenance of an Indian life, whose loss I really regretted. I felt that I wanted something to assist my indolence, for utter idleness is the greatest exertion, when you are determined to force it upon yourself; so I rang the bell for the morning papers, and having conned a speech of my uncle's, I proceeded to study the "fashionable intelligence"—the rumours—and *on dits* of the day.

In one paragraph there was a list of some half dozen gentlemen of the ministerial party, who were reported as "about to be raised to the peerage,"—evidently for the express purpose of propping a declining cause, by increasing their majority in the Upper House, the Lords being just then very much at variance with the Commons. Amongst these *distinguished* names I read that of Matthew Jerningham. "Faugh!" I exclaimed, "'tis a lie—Uncle Matthew the tool of a party!"—so I threw aside the paper in disgust, and began to think of Margaret de Laurier and Ellen Hervey in the same cycle of thought.

I asked myself, "What am I about?" It is true that I had not committed myself,—that I was still a free agent, and under no conventional obligation; but this was not enough for me. To be honourable in the eyes of the world is not to be

honourable in your own: and it was my desire to conduct myself in such a manner, that whilst making myself happy I might inflict pain upon no living creature, however blameless my behaviour might be. I had learned a lesson of benevolence from my friend Everard Sinclair, and seeking to imitate him, I had much enhanced my natural kindness. But here I was "between the horns of a dilemma." I was profoundly in love with Miss de Laurier; though I did not yet encourage the belief that there was a reciprocity of passion between us;—I would have given the whole world to have made Margaret my wife; and I did not altogether despair of being able to bring about the consummation. But I did not forget Ellen Hervey. I was very fond of this gentle young creature; and her happiness was indispensable to my own. I had known her so long, that I loved her as a favorite sister; and to have thought of *marrying* Ellen would have been too much like incest, in my mind. But then I had renewed my friendship with this young maid, since I had arrived at man's estate; we had met upon the theatre of life as adults, and in the presence of one another we had poured out our souls freely; and though we had never spoken of love, we had communed, as only lovers commune. There are tones, and looks, and gestures, which are more eloquent of passion

than words ; and when Ellen Hervey and I sate, in her father's house, talking of our childish days, in the dusk of a summer's twilight, we had laid bare our hearts in such a manner, as neither of us would have ventured to have done but in the pleasant society of each other. Ellen loved me ; it could not be otherwise ; she had loved me from her earliest childhood, and limited as had been her intercourse with mankind, years were more likely to have strengthened than to have effaced the feelings of her girlhood. If she had gone abroad into the world she might have forgotten me ; but in the solitude of her home my image was not easily to be effaced from her memory. Besides, I had seen enough of Ellen, since my return from Hindostan, to certify me that her affectionate heart still clave to the first object of her love ; and I knew, though she might not have encouraged a hope of ever being my wife, that my marriage with any other woman would be a death-blow to her happiness and peace. " Shall I discard," I said to myself, " the certainty of this young maiden's love for the problematical issue of another suit, which, as yet only in its infancy, may end in disappointment and sorrow." But I thought of Margaret de Laurier, and my half-formed resolution of abandoning her was shaken to the very base.

There could not, in the whole world, have been two beings more opposite to one another—mind and body—than were Ellen and Margaret. I should have liked Ellen Hervey for my sister, and Margaret de Laurier for my wife. Ellen was very fair; with gentle, blue eyes, and the most beautiful yellow ringlets that ever glittered in the sunlight. Margaret had dark brown hair, and large hazel eyes; but her complexion was so uncertain that you scarcely could determine its hue. Ellen's figure was slight and fragile; she looked younger than she was; but Margaret's, though perfectly graceful, was full, rounded, and voluptuous, giving her a womanish appearance which you would not have expected from her years. The two maidens, in one picture, would have furnished the finest illustration imaginable of that line of Edmund Spenser's, to which our painters are so much indebted—

Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm.

Ellen Hervey might have sate for the personation of Youth; Margaret de Laurier for the image of Pleasure. I am not sure that, seeing them in a picture, I should not have preferred the loveliness of Ellen; for no painter could have caught the *transitions* of Margaret's countenance. Ellen was always placid, and her serenity was charactered in her face; but the aspect of Margaret varied with

each several change of feeling which passed athwart her moral structure, like clouds on an April day, which, every minute, diversify the landscape. Ellen was *always* gentle; Margaret had her gentle moods, as the ocean has; but she was full of passion; and though none could be more truly feminine than Miss de Laurier, in her softer hours, there were seasons of excitement, when her exhibitions of feeling were appalling. The bark of Ellen's existence moved along with a gentle breeze; but Margaret's was, at one moment becalmed,—at another, tossed by a tempest. Ellen was all simplicity; she did not know that she was pretty; and she did not desire to be clever; she had no pretensions whatever; she presumed not to display her accomplishments: indeed she did not know that she had any—but she *was* accomplished, for she sang beautifully, and painted with a degree of taste rarely seen in one so youthful. Indeed she had a remarkable aptitude for acquiring knowledge of all kinds; but when she studied it was for the sake of others; and if she rejoiced in her attainments, it was only because they made her more beloved. But Margaret de Laurier was a genius; she thirsted after knowledge for its own sake. She loved poetry and was herself a poetess; she loved music, but most of all in solitude, when she could abandon herself entirely to its delights,

without a care for the betrayal of her excitement, in unrestrained enthusiasm and rapture. She could not feel a common interest in any thing; she entered, with her whole soul, into a pursuit, or she neglected it altogether. It was precisely the same with her attachments; she loved engrossingly, or she loved not at all. She had no *likings*; she knew not the word; it was either utter apathy, or deep passion with her; she was one who delighted in excesses. But Ellen Hervey loved every body; she loved one person better than another; but still there was a portion of her affection to be bestowed upon all whom she knew. She never hated; she could not hate. If you wronged her, she would forgive you immediately. She was the most patient creature in the world,—a fragile flower, and a tempest would have killed her. She never offered resistance; she would bend, until the stem were snapped, and then she must die; but she would say nothing. Margaret was not of this nature; she would have resisted; but resistance would have killed her.

Incomplete as this comparison is, it is sufficient to show the distinctive qualities of Ellen Hervey and Margaret de Laurier.

My readers will take their own choice between these two lovely young maidens. At the time, of which I am now writing, Margaret de Laurier was uppermost in my affections.

I arose from my recumbent posture to contemplate my image in a mirror, and was just arranging my curls, when a servant entered the room and presented me with a letter. It was from Mr. Sinclair's solicitor, and contained an enclosure, addressed to myself, from that rustic Titan, who had gone in search of his brother to the north. I tore open the letter eagerly, and in a minute I had forgotten Margaret, and Ellen, and the whole world—at least every body in it but my poor friend Everard Sinclair. The following is a transcript of the letter:—

TO CLAUDE JERNINGHAM, ESQ.

*Kirkby Lonsdale,
September 9, 18—.*

“ My dear Mr. Jerningham,
“ Although, I trust, that my arrival in London will be almost immediately consequent upon the receipt of this letter, yet knowing how anxious you must be to be made acquainted with the progress of this northern expedition of mine, I will not suffer another post to go forth without writing to inform you of what I have done since we parted.

“ The exertions of my agent, Mr. —— availed to trace my brother into Westmoreland. The discovery was purely accidental in the first instance, having been elicited in casual conversation with

some friends who had just quitted the Lakes. It happened that one of the party, in the course of a summer-day's ramble, had fallen in with a young artist, whose appearance had prepossessed him so highly, that he determined to accost the young man. A conversation arose between them, and the gentleman having collected from the tenour of the young painter's remarks, that he depended upon his pencil for his livelihood, made an offer immediately to purchase all the sketches that he had in his portfolio. The artist was willing enough to part with his drawings to the stranger, but fixed such a low value upon them that the gentleman was perfectly astonished; and stated his anxiety to pay double the price demanded; however, the artist was peremptory, and the gentleman departed with his purchase. The drawings were brought to London; and one of our first painters declared them to be exquisite productions. The initials, E. S. were inscribed upon each sketch. I have no doubt but that the artist was my brother.

“This struck Mr. — immediately; he wrote to inform me of what had happened; and sent an express into Westmoreland to gain more certain information about the artist; the messenger returned with an account of having discovered a young gentleman, who answered to the description which

had been furnished to the informant, residing in the village of * * *, very much straitened in pecuniary circumstances, and in a state of health, which might readily excite the apprehension of his friends for his safety. The individual who had procured this intelligence was particular in stating that the name of this young man was *not* Everard Sinclair; but I did not take this fact into consideration, knowing how easy it is for a stranger in an obscure village to assume, without fear of detection, any appellation that may best answer his purpose: so, immediately upon my arrival in London, I prepared for a departure into Westmoreland, being determined to neglect no chance, however problematical, of discovering my brother.

“For the more certain prevention of all delay in discovering the place, I took with me the young man (a clerk in Mr. ——’s office), who had furnished the important information, which had induced me to prosecute this journey.

“We proceeded by the Carlisle Mail as far as Kendal, where we took a chaise, and were driven to the village of * * *, indicated by my fellow-traveller as the probable residence of poor Everard. We stopped at the inn, and having quitted our vehicle, we walked across a kind of green or common, my companion acting as guide, for he was very well acquainted with the locality. We had

not proceeded far when my associate, pointing to a cottage some short distance in advance of us, stopped suddenly with an embarrassed air, and said ‘That, Mr. Sinclair, is the house.’

“‘That cottage,’ I asked, ‘with the green railings and the new thatch?’ ‘The same, sir,’ replied the young man. ‘Are you positive?’ ‘Quite, Mr. Sinclair.’ ‘Gracious heavens!’ I exclaimed, ‘*then my poor brother is dead!*’

“The most appalling spectacle presented itself:—Three or four men in black, with weepers, hatbands, &c., whom I knew, at first sight, to be undertakers, stood before the cottage-door, evidently waiting whilst some of their party were engaged within upon the business of their calling. These men were mutes, and pall-bearers;—there was no mistaking their insignia; and, when I coupled their presence at the cottage with the account I had received of my poor brother’s sickness, I was possessed with the deoslating certainty of Everard’s unhappy demise. I quickened my pace; I ran forward; in little more than a minute I was at the gate. I accosted one of the men with the abrupt question, ‘Who is dead?’—The man stared; he saw at once that I was a stranger. ‘Law! sir, I hardly know,’ said the man; ‘a young gem’man, who has lodged here some

intendence,' I asked, 'is th
'Mrs. Barnes, sir, the 'oman
be a very respectable body, and
left behind him a few properties,
to pay for the funeral; for th
mighty poor.'

"I might have relieved mys
suspense, by asking, whether
a married or a single man; but
that I overlooked this circumsta
fact of the man having said
might have eased me, in some n
no time to reflect calmly, or to b
with any nicety.

"I was just entering the cotta
men at the door, bringing out
them. I desired them to set i
the goodness to unscrew the
astonished at my request, and
sisted that they should obey
One of the men, who acted as

also:—I am a formidable person in appearance. However, I recollected myself presently, and said, ‘My good man, I do not seek to intimidate you; but I have great reason to suspect that the corpse in that coffin was once a relation of my own.—You will oblige me, therefore, by unscrewing the lid; I will remunerate you for the trouble I give.’

“The man, seeing the excitement under which I so manifestly laboured, believed the truth of my story, and stated his willingness to comply with my request, provided that the woman of the house, under whose orders he acted, had no objection to such a proceeding.

“Mrs. Barnes, by this time, attracted by the turmoil in front of the cottage, had made her appearance in person; and, therefore, having apprized her of my suspicions, I soon procured her sanction to what I wanted. The coffin was carried in again; the pall was thrown aside; the lid was unscrewed; the shroud removed from the face of the corpse; and I saw, to my inexpressible delight, that the dead man was *not* my brother.

“As I am confining this letter to facts, I need say nothing about my feelings:—you will understand what they were, Mr. Jerningham; and in a few days, when I hope to see you, I will relate my adventure more at full. For the present, be it enough to say, that this Arctic expedition of mine,

like many others, has turned out a failure ; and that, just at present, I am as far from discovering my brother, as Captain Parry from the North Pole.—However, we must persevere ; and, as I understand you are now in London, we will take counsel when we meet.

“ I am, my dear Mr. Jerningham,

Your’s, &c.,

CHARLES SINCLAIR.”

“ P. S.—I hope to see you at Cloddington before the season is over:—my preserves want thinning, sadly ;—I have been spending a few days with a friend in this place. I start for the metropolis on Friday.”

I had just perused this document, and was abandoning myself to the reflections it suggested, when I heard the postman’s short, imperative rap at the front door ; and presently a servant entered, bringing me a letter from my brother Frederick. The first sentence was enough to disgust me.

———— Oxford,
September 10, 18—.

“ My dearest Brother,

“ I have just learnt, from our dear, kind uncle, that you have once more taken up your residence beneath his hospitable roof. I suppose, indeed, I fondly hope, that you have, therefore, relinquished

your unseemly pursuit of Mr. Sinclair,—a step which, I am certain, my dear brother did not rightly consider before he took; for a little reflection might have told him that to *interfere with the behests of the Almighty*——”

I had read quite enough of this canting production; I should have thrown it behind the fire, but that there was none; so I tore it into fragments,—I would not have read it through for the world. I took up a volume of Fielding, and began to read one of my favourite pieces;—hour after hour slipped away. I received a note from my uncle.

“Westminster, Two o’Clock.

“My dear Claude,

“I shall not be home to dinner;—there is very much to be done. A sharp debate upon ——’s motion is expected this evening; so I shall have a steak and a veal pie at Bellamy’s, at half-past six. Come and keep me company at that hour.—Your name is on the Speaker’s list, but suit yourself about attending our discussion; however, you might probably be amused, as * * *, and * * *, and * * * are all likely to speak. Send an answer by the bearer.

Very affectionately, yours,

MATTHEW JERNINGHAM.”

I could not have refused my uncle, if my poor head had been splitting. When I entered the coffee-room, at Bellamy's, my uncle was not there. The truth is, that I was a little too early; and Mr. Jerningham was a punctual man, who thought it as great a dereliction to be before, as to be after, his time. Whilst I was waiting the advent of my uncle, I amused myself in looking around the room, and scrutinizing the eaters present. I had not employed myself in this manner very long, before my eyes fell on the two Messrs. Boroughs. They were both of them displaying their voraciousness upon the contents of a veal pie. I went up to them; they were very glad to see me; but they wished that I had made my appearance upon some less inopportune occasion.

"Ah! Jerningham, how do you do?"—and a prodigious mouthful of meat and jelly rendered the rest of the sentence inarticulate.

"D—d good pies, these," said Boroughs, *senior*. "The fellow ought to take out a patent. 'Tis worth one's while to be a Member of Parliament, if it were only to feed at Bellamy's. Good plan, that, Mr. Jerningham, of cooking one's steaks in the room; they do come so hot."—And Heliogabalus smacked his lips.

"Parliamentary duties," cried Boroughs, *junior*,

whilst he assisted himself to the *reliquiæ* of the pie, "are certainly *very* fatiguing; and, if it were not for this support to the physical man, Mr. Jerningham, the intellectual man—that is, the mind,—would soon exhaust its natural energies. I conceive it my duty, therefore,—that is to say, upon principle——"

"D—n your principle," interrupted the elder brother;—"a good dinner is one of the blessings of life. Is it not, Mr. Jerningham? eh!—Hang it, I hate ceremony; it's high time that I dropped the Mr. —, William; (addressing his brother) what say you to another pie? Here, waiter! Betsey,—you aren't going to *stop the supplies*?"

"By the bye, Jerningham," cried the younger Boroughs, who was now exceedingly loquacious, because his plate was quite empty, "have you heard from Leicester lately?—Capital fellow his lordship, but rather too fond of the bottle; he *does* entice one to drink,—hang it, he is *such* a soaker,—and Poroon, too; poor Sir Charles!—melancholy accident, that."

"Accident! what accident?" I asked; for as yet I had heard nothing of any casualty.

"Dear me! haven't you heard? Poor Poroon was killed the other day;—broke his neck in a steeple-chase, which he would most undoubtedly have won. Poor fellow! the 'ruling passion'

wards."

"And such is life!" I said, deep-drawn sigh, which would I but for the clatter of knives and rounded me on every side.

"The worst of these Parlia remarked the elder Boroughs, that one cannot serve one's count at the same time. Hang it, 'tis be in London at this time of year Jerningham, *eh!*—a patriot must of his private feelings for the sake welfare."

I ventured to ask the Senator the important question at that m House. "Patriots" as they were their answers that they had nev minutes, upon the merits or dem although it was one of the most tions that had been discussed thro Session.

much interested in the question ; will you have the goodness to give me your vote ? ”

The brothers exchanged glances. “ Whig or Tory ? ” asked Boroughs *minor* ; — “ under which king, Bezonian ? Charles, hand the cayenne. ”

“ Oh ! ” I said, “ you know my uncle, Matthew Jerningham, member for — ; a whig of the old school ; — no democrat, Mr. Boroughs. ”

“ Why ; I hardly know what to say, ” replied the ‘ Long Parliament, ’ — “ we were tories last Session, I think ; however, *n’importe*. Have the goodness, if you please, to explain the nature of the bill. But that would be a long business. It’s nothing about close boroughs ; is it, Jerningham, eh ? Give me your word to that, and I’ll promise to vote with your uncle. ”

“ If it’s nothing about rotten boroughs, ” cried the younger senator, as in duty bound, following the steps of his exemplary brother, — “ I will promise you my vote, too. ”

I silenced the scruples of these conscientious members, and the votes were promised me accordingly.

One of the neighbouring clocks chimed half an hour after six ; and as the last sound vibrated upon my ear, Matthew Jerningham entered the room.

I bade adieu to my epicurean friends with expressions of the warmest gratitude ; and walked

off to join my uncle, who complimented me much on my punctuality.

“Uncle,” I said, “is there any truth in that newspaper story I read this morning? Forgive me if I am wrong when I say that I don’t believe it.”

“What story, my dear boy? I haven’t read the papers to-day.”

“They say, uncle, that you are about to be raised to the peerage immediately. I know not by what title; but you are already an embryo lord.”

“Do the newspapers write thus, Claude? What infinite pains they take to prove that they are unworthy of credit! In the first place I have *not* been offered a peerage; and in the second, if I were to be offered one, situated as I am, I should decline the honour: not from any disrespect, God forbid! to the titled aristocracy of the country; but because having no children——.” Here Mr. Jerningham paused—the sentence was not finished; he rarely could finish a sentence that touched upon his childless condition.

I saw that my uncle was moved. “Do you anticipate a majority?” I asked. “What is the aspect of affairs?—Will your struggles be crowned with success?” I was anxious to divert his thoughts into a current unconnected with self.

My uncle shook his head. "I fear not," said he, "the battle will be vigorously contested. The numerical strength of the house is so equally divided, that I dare say one vote more or less on either side might vary the aspect of success, and settle this important question."

"Do you know the members for——; the two Messrs. Boroughs? Do you calculate upon their support, or will they vote against the ministry?"

"I know them; they will vote against us." My uncle upon no occasion spoke slightly of his political opponents.

"No, uncle; for once you are in error;"—and I told him of my parliamentary traffic.

"Oh! you rogue, Claude," said my uncle, half in jest and half in earnest,— "I am ashamed of you." Then assuming a more serious tone;— "But, really, my dear boy, I am sorry that this should have happened."

"Why, uncle," I said laughing, and endeavouring to look innocent, — "the Boroughs having no opinion of their own, may just as well adopt yours as that of any body else. I see no harm, if they are willing to go, in tossing them into your side of the balance."

There was a division that night; and the ministerial measure was carried by a single vote.

CHAPTER VII.

Leander on her quivering breast,
Breathless spoke something, and sighed out the rest ;
Which so prevailed, as he with small ado,
Enclosed her in his arms and kissed her too.
So that the truce was broke, and she, alas !
Poor silly maiden at his mercy was.

MARLOWE.

A FEW days after this, to the great joy of the country gentlemen, Parliament was happily prorogued. On the same evening I went, by invitation, to dine at Mr. de Laurier's.

Since my first visit to the Italian, I had called twice at his house. My second interview with Margaret I have already slightly recorded. My amour made no great progress on that day, because the Signor was present the whole time. My third visit was more successful ; for I had lunched with them, and Margaret had sung to me, and Mr. de

Laurier had left us alone together for nearly three quarters of an hour, whilst he was engaged in the library with his solicitor; and Margaret would not let me go, till her father saw me again, for he had "something particular to say." She was quite sure of that.

Margaret was a dear creature to make love to, for she was all frankness and sincerity; she had feelings, and she was not afraid to speak of them. If there had been a window in her heart you could not have known her better. She had no secrets to keep; she would tell you her inmost thoughts if you had once inspired her with confidence. Her face communed with you too; it was "readable as an open book;" who could ever play the hypocrite with such a face?

I was certainly introduced to Margaret under very great advantages; mine was no common ball-room introduction; it had taken place under extraordinary circumstances, and was, therefore, more likely to produce a speedy intimacy between us. I had won the affections of her father by threatening to shoot him thorough the head; and as I had conducted myself, in this embarrassment, with propriety, and, indeed, with spirit, I was not mistaken in thinking that Margaret would like me the better for the part I had acted in the contention, especially as the business had been consum-

mated by a catastrophe so pleasant to all parties. Mr. de Laurier, since the evening of our strife, had never mentioned my name to his daughter without some flattering epithet or other ; and as I was the nephew of Matthew Jerningham, to whom the De Lauriers were so deeply indebted, it is not to be wondered that, in a few days, I was as intimate with both father and daughter, as if I had known them for a series of years.

Indeed I had already gained permission from the young lady to call her *Margaret*, when I went on the 16th of September to dine with the De Lauriers in —— street.

Mr. de Laurier was full of excuses. “ My dear friend,” he exclaimed, “ I am afraid you will find it very sombre,—for we are all alone this evening, only Margaret and I. To tell the truth, I had asked one or two friends to meet you. I hate large parties, and so does my daughter, Mr. Jerningham ; but somehow, I have been disappointed. * * * was to have come, but he has just lost his brother ; and Ugo Foscolo, I asked him to meet you, he is one of the oldest friends I have, and Margaret is so fond of him ; but, poor fellow ! he is very ill, unable to leave his bed, much less to quit the house.”

“ Poor Foscolo ! He is so clever ; do you know Ugo Foscolo, Mr. Jerningham ?” asked Margaret,

in a melancholy voice, for she was grieving for her sick friend.

"Only by report," I said. But Mr. de Laurier interrupted me, by lamenting that I should find it so dull.

The dinner passed off well enough; every thing was in exquisite taste. How very happy I was; how my heart bounded with joy and exultation. Already I beheld, prospectively, Margaret de Laurier my affianced bride.

After dinner, De Laurier and I conversed on various topics. He spoke of Italy; and his eloquence was unloosed. Knowing his history, as I did, I was affected; and my eyes glistened. I turned aside to conceal my agitation, under a pretext of helping myself to some olives. A servant entered the room: he brought a note for his master.

"From Mr. Foscolo, sir, if you please. The man was desired to wait for an answer."

De Laurier tore open the note, and hastily perused its contents. "Mr. Jerningham, I trust you will excuse me; my friend, Foscolo, is alarmingly ill; he desires to see me immediately."

"Not another word, Mr. de Laurier, I beseech you." To tell the truth, though distressed by the cause of it, I was delighted at Mr. de Laurier's departure.

“Don’t run away, Mr. Jerningham. I shall be back in time to see you, I hope. Margaret, I dare say, will sing to you. I will tell her to be very agreeable. But I need not do that, I am sure, when Mr. Claude Jerningham is her companion.”

Mr. de Laurier went his way, and I abandoned myself for a few minutes to the pleasantest reflections imaginable. But I did not remain idle very long; for I started up, and cried, “Fool, fool, to enjoy the shadow instead of the substance,—the image and not the reality of bliss.” So I drank off a bumper of wine to “Sweet Margaret de Laurier;” and, hastening up stairs, in a moment I was seated by her side.

How radiantly beautiful she was! what harmony in that impassioned face! She was reading when I entered the room, and the poetry of the volume before her was legibly written upon her countenance. You might tell at once what she was reading by the peculiar expression of her features.

She was sitting upon the sofa with her book; and her beautiful sandaled feet were resting upon a worked cushion. I would have given the whole world to have kissed those little feet.

I seated myself beside her. She was so wrapt up in her book, that she did not know I had entered the room. I tried to say something, but I

could not; I looked into her face; and she was aware of my presence; but she did not raise her eyes from the book. At last, I said, "Margaret,"—and she looked at me, and answered, "Claude."—Then I knew that my love was returned.

Presently she inquired after her father. "He has gone out," I said; but I would not tell her where he was gone. This was partly selfish, and partly not. I would not distress Margaret, and I wished her to think of no one but me.

"Will he be back soon?" asked Margaret.

"Not very," I said; "do you wish him to come back?"

Margaret did not answer; but her face seemed to say, "I do not."

We spake of various things; but we did not say that we loved one another. It was pleasant to *feel* this, without uttering our feelings. We seemed to shrink from words, as too noisy and palpable to embody the delicacy of our sensations. That is a pretty Oriental custom, where love-letters are made out of flowers.

We spake of beauty,—universal beauty; and this led us to consider the respective advantages of personal and intellectual endowments. Margaret contended in favour of the latter, whilst I was vehement in exalting the former. I said that, in my opinion, beauty was the greatest blessing in the

Margaret astonished
and profoundness of a
I could remember wh
deavour to give a d
She did not talk quite
she was a mere girl;
age; and though she
was always very clever
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logical.

"What is it, Margu
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a shady place?" "

She did not answer fo
blushed, and I knew
you not tell me?" I as
finish the sentence, I c
it——"

And she *did* finish t
quaint monosyllable wo
side

“ Yes, Margaret, it is love ! and what a beautiful thing it is. ‘ Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it ; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.’ ”

“ How beautiful ! ” cried Margaret, “ those must be inspired words.”

“ They are,” I said, “ it is the language of Solomon. You acknowledge then, with me, Margaret, that love surpasses all other blessings, as the sun outshines all the stars of the firmament. But what is the oil, Margaret, that cherishes the lamp of love ? ”

“ Genius.”

“ I think not ; I am sure not, Margaret ; it is *beauty*. Genius may awaken admiration, honour, respect, flattery, but it will not awaken love. We *fondle* that which we love, but we could not caress deformity though it were the temple of brightest genius. We look with an eye of kindness upon all beautiful things, even the many-coloured, crested snake, as its graceful folds glitter in the sun ; we love it, though it has venom in its mouth,—there is that in beauty—”

“ Claude, Claude, I will not suffer you to go on ; you talk of beauty,—what then is genius ? Is it not intellectual beauty ? What is the body when weighed against the mind ? what is this dull mass

of clayey matter to the essential soul of man? What is a span of life to eternity? Oh, Claude, do not set up the substance against the spirit of man; stones, flowers, all insensate things, the birds of the air, the brutes that perish, are clothed in robes of beauty and splendour; but man—only man, Claude, whom God made after his own image, is illuminated with the light of genius, and can boast the possession of a soul.”

“Alas! Margaret,” I replied, “we have fallen upon evil days. That genius is a more ennobling possession than beauty, I seek not to deny. I should be insensate, indeed, were I to do so. *But is it a greater blessing?* Margaret, I think not. They who have *both*,” and here I paused, and looked significantly into the maiden’s face, “they who are doubly-gifted know not how to answer this question. They are beloved—they are conscious of the result, but when they dive into the cause of this mystery, it is natural that they should rather believe that their attractive powers are centred in their minds than in their bodies, because the mind is so much nobler than the body. There is a pretty little eastern fable——”

“Nay, Claude, I won’t allow your fable to have any weight,” cried Margaret, shaking her dark ringlets, and smiling with a face full of joy.

“Then what say you to a fact, my little utili-

tarian : there is one Madame de Stael, a vain woman it is true, but a woman of great genius, she said, that for one attribute of beauty she would exchange all her mental endowments. I like her the better for this ; she was sick and weary of admiration—she wished to barter it for love. I have heard this speech differently interpreted, but such is my construction, it is charitable ; Madame De Stael had an unlovely person, and she was like the sensitive plant of your own dear Shelley, which (you must tell me if I quote not aright)

“ Has no bright flower,
Radiance and odour are not its dower ;
It loves e'en like love its deep heart is full,
It desires what it has not—the beautiful.”

When I apply these beautiful verses to the French woman, I apply them to all who, like her, have genius without beauty, and who are taught by the presence of the former to feel more acutely the absence of the latter.”

“ If love were only the hand-maiden of beauty, then Claude, I would say with you, there is nothing like beauty in the world. But it is not so : I will quote you a passage from the same volume,” and she started up to fetch a book which was lying on the table. It was a Paris edition, containing a triad of poets—Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats.

She turned over the leaves of the book, and, presently in a sweet silver-toned voice, she read the following lines from the Prometheus:—

“ Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever.
Like the wide heaven—the all-sustaining air,
It makes the reptile equal to the god.
They who——.”

She paused suddenly—her face—her neck—her shoulders, were died with a crimson hue. She bent her head forward, and she pressed both her hands upon her eyes, like one who strives with all her might, to prevent the tears from gushing forth. Then she trembled all over, “from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot,” the excitement of her feelings made her tremble, and all because she had alighted upon a passage which was strangely applicable to her own condition.

“Margaret, are you unwell?” I drew myself closer to her side, and gently withdrawing her pressing hands from the bright orbs that they covered, I continued, “Oh, Margaret, speak to me! Have I said anything?—yet that were impossible! You alarm me, my *dear* Margaret!” and Margaret lifted up her eyes.

Then, seeing that she had almost recovered herself, I cried—“Will you read on? I should like you to finish the sentence, though I hardly know

what it contains : I am sure it must be something very beautiful, yet I dare not look at it myself. Margaret, I should like you so much to finish reading that passage."

"Give me the book, Claude. I will read it, if you wish me to do so. Yet how foolish I am. You must think me a great simpleton, I am sure." And then taking the book into her hand, she fixed her eyes upon the printed page, though they traced not the characters written there ; for they were too full of tears to see any thing distinctly, and Margaret knew the passage by rote. I never shall forget the tones of her voice, as she articulated the following words : I never shall forget the thrilling emotions with which I drank in every syllable she uttered. She began the passage anew.

"Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever.
Like the wide heaven—the all-sustaining air,
It makes the reptile equal to the god :
They who inspire it most are fortunate
As I am now ; but those who feel it most
Are happier still, after long sufferings,
As I shall soon become."

What a beautiful thing it is to make love over a volume of poetry !

"Heaven bless you, my Margaret !" I cried.
"Yes, *my* Margaret : " and was she not my troth-

plight bride, as much as if she had said, "I am yours?"

"Heaven bless you, my own sweet Margaret!" And encircling her trembling waist, with an arm scarcely less tremulous, I pressed the palpitating maiden to my bosom, whilst a long, burning, passionate kiss, that would have gained the prize at the Dioclesian festivals,* bespoke the intensity of my love.

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"What a beautiful volume this is, Claude! I am so glad that you admire Shelley. Do you know, I please myself with the fancy that Shelley was an *Italian poet*. His writings are imbued with an inspiration peculiar to that sunny land. He lived there, and he died there, you know. I look upon Byron, too, as half an Italian, and Keats. Do you speak the Italian language? It is the language of poetry and" — she paused, and cast down her eyes. Her frame trembled slightly. Whenever she was much excited, she shook all over like an aspen-leaf.

I finished the sentence in her stead—" '*Love,*' Margaret! It is the language of poetry and love. I am but a poor scholar: my ignorance puts me to

* Festivals in honour of Diocles, celebrated annually at his tomb, where the youth who gave the sweetest kiss, was publicly rewarded with a garland.

the blush. I have read 'Petrarch,' and some portion of the 'Giarusalemme;' but my knowledge is very imperfect. I will learn it, though, for your sake, Margaret. Perhaps you will teach me." And I smiled.

Margaret's countenance assumed a serious aspect. "Claude," she said, "I was born in Italy. You know not what aspirations I have to visit that sunny clime. I am an Italian,—my father is an Italian. You will not quarrel with me, Claude, for boasting that I belong not to the same country as yourself."

"No, Margaret." And I smiled upon her. If my heart spoke out from my face, assuredly that was a loving smile.

"I was an infant,"—continued Margaret,—“a baby, when they took me from my father-land; but I may not visit it again: an angel, with a flaming-sword forbids me to re-enter this Paradise. Do you know why,—why,—why?" And there was an unusual energy in the tones of her voice. "I will tell you, Claude,—I will tell you. Listen!"

"My dear Margaret," I said, soothingly; "do not be thus excited. Spare yourself the recital of this story. Believe me, I know all."

"And who told you?" asked Margaret earnestly.

“My uncle, sweetest :—do not distress yourself. Let us forget this. Shall I read to you ?”

Margaret had suffered the book to fall upon the ground. I went down upon one knee to pick it up. I did not rise, for I saw the cushion upon which Margaret’s feet had been resting : one little foot was still there. I looked up into the maiden’s face, “May I sit upon that cushion ?” I said.

Margaret smiled. “You may sit there,—why not ? But my Lord Hamlet”—— Then she checked herself suddenly, and continued, “I almost forget, Claude, what I was about to say. Something very silly, I am sure,—something not worth remembering.”

I sate down on the cushion, as Hamlet sate by Ophelia. It was some allusion to this that Margaret was about to make ; but perhaps she thought,—though I know not why she should,—that the allusion was not quite maiden-like, and, therefore, she would not utter it. I opened the volume and began to read. The poem I fixed upon was that sweet ballad of Coleridge’s, the “Introduction to the tale of the Dark Ladye ;”—perhaps the most beautiful love-verses which the English language enshrines. If I did not read with taste, I am sure that I read with feeling ; for the tears were in my own eyes, and they trilled down Margaret’s cheeks. Almost every line of the song struck some accord-

ant note in our bosoms. But when I came to that part where the minstrel declares his passion for Genevieve, in the words of the "old and moving story" he is singing—

I told her how he pined; and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sung another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush;
With down-cast eyes and modest grace;
And she forgave me that I gazed
Too fondly on her face.

The book fell from my hand; I could not utter another line. It was all too true; it was too close a picture of ourselves. My tones and gestures were exactly those of the ideal wooer in the ballad. There was no acting upon my part. I did not seek to adapt my bearing to the words of the poetry before me. It was all spontaneous; I could not help it. I *did* gaze too fondly upon Margaret's lovely face. Yet, why *too* fondly? I am sure that she forgave me; but I forgot every thing in the world when gazing upon that face. I could not read; I could not hear; I could not see any thing but that beauteous face. I took one of Margaret's hands between my own, and, looking upwards from my lowly posture, I fixed my eyes so intently upon the maiden's countenance,

—with such a wrapt and admiring expression pervading my every feature, that a sculptor would have been glad of such a model for a statue of incarnate adoration.

There was a long silence—a long eloquent silence. We felt how entirely dear we were to one another; and we were happy. I was the first to utter a word. I awoke, as it were, from a dream of joy; I started up from my humble seat, and placing myself beside Margaret, I said, “Speak to me, dearest; it is better that we would be more tranquil.” Margaret echoed the word “tranquil;” she scarcely knew what tranquillity meant, when coupled with the name of love. She was a native of the sunny south— and her love was a passion; it was rapture; it was excitement; she could not be calm and *love* at the same time.

“Let us think of something else,” I said, “let us—.” But Margaret interrupted me in a reproachful voice.

“Let us think of something else, say you? Oh, Claude! Claude!”

“Nay, Margaret, do not be angry. God knows how entire is my affection—but this intense excitement may be injurious. I tremble for your sake, Margaret; I tremble for the safety of the sensitive plant. Will you not acknowledge that I am right? It is better that we should be more tranquil. Perhaps you will sing to me, sweetest.”

“ Yes, Claude, you are right. I am a weak, silly creature. I forget every thing; I forget myself; I forget to do the honours of our house. Would you like coffee? I forgot to ask you; and my father is very particular that the servants shall not enter the room when they are not summoned; and I dare say they wonder:—we had better have the coffee, I think: may I ask you to ring the bell?”

A footman obeyed the summons, and Margaret, bending over a large book of prints, syllabled the word “ coffee.” Presently the man re-appeared.

I took a cup from the salver; Margaret would not drink any coffee; I was glad to hear her refuse it; for she could not have taken aught more injurious in the present excited state of her nerves.

I soon dismissed the liveried cup-bearer, and seated myself again upon the sofa. “ Margaret,” I said, “ you are a poetess—somebody told me this; perhaps you told me so yourself; however, I know it; is it not so? May I read some of your poetry?”

“ I write verses sometimes,” replied Margaret, “ but I will not—I dare not—emulate to myself the sacred name of a poetess. Petrarch was a poet; Shakspeare was a poet; Shelley was a poet—but *I*, Claude—this is no affectation—I pour out my feelings upon paper, and I clothe them in

rhymes and metres. But this is not all that is wanted. I know, but I cannot tell you what real poetry is. You will think me very fanciful perhaps, but I have thought at times that I *am* a poet, though I cannot *write* poetry. We have both of us been poets to-night. I have thoughts and feelings within me : I have all the ideal part of poetry—but when I seek to embody my ideas in words, I fail—I am no longer a poet—I become at once low, worldly, mechanical. I think that if I had been educated in Italy—in my own country, Claude—I should have been an improvisatrice. You smile ; I am sure that you must think me a vain, foolish girl.”

“ Oh, Margaret !” I exclaimed, “ how well I understand what you mean. If you had never written a line, I should still call you a poetess. I thought so before I heard you speak. I think so now, Margaret. When I saw you for the first time at the theatre, I was sure that you had poetry in your soul.”

“ For my part,” continued Margaret, “ there is something, I cannot help thinking, anomalous in printed poetry. You will say I am very singular, but I cannot understand how the poet can bear to unbosom himself before the world. I allude only to egotistical poetry—such as are the sonnets of Petrarch and Shakspeare, and almost all Lord

Byron's writings. I once met Mr. Hazlitt at a party. I remember having heard him say that Shakspeare was 'the least of an egotist of any man that ever lived.' He was not an egotist in his plays; because he kept all his egotisms for his sonnets. But this is not right either. I am always in error, Claude, when I use that word, '*because*.' I am no logician. I know nothing of causes. But I think that Shakspeare was an egotist."

She ceased, wishing me to say something; but I only cried, "Go on; I love to hear thy sweet voice, Margaret."

"I have very little to say, I am afraid, unless I repeat something that I have already spoken of before:—I marvel how a poet can lay bare his heart to the gaze of an unfeeling public; I marvel how a creature of sensibility can make confidants of the whole world; I marvel how he can dare to communicate the inmost secrets of his soul—his joys, his sorrows, his hopes, his fears; and, above all, his *love*, Claude, to a sordid and insensate multitude, who laugh at his fine feelings, and make a mock of his agony, and cry out in the plenitude of their brutish exultation—'Ha! ha! ha!—I am better than this man—what a wretched creature is a poet!—genius, a fine thing truly; 'tis another name for unhappiness'—and then, Claude,

they thank God that they are ‘not as this man is.’ I have heard it; yes, it is true. I have heard it, and I have wept to hear it. But I have not wondered at the people; I have only wondered at the poet.”

“Sorrow is egotistical, Margaret. Poetry is the child of sorrow;—your own poet has said that

Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong;
They learn in suffering what they teach in song.

It is very true, Margaret, but it is strange that they should desire to teach. But will you not sing to me, Margaret? I should so like to hear you sing this evening.”

Margaret did not answer; but rising from the sofa, she walked straightway towards her harp, and having seated herself beside it, she stretched out her beautiful arms, and striking a few irregular preludious notes, she awakened the chords of the instrument, with a rapid, yet delicate touch, until they had taken their measured tone; and then the full harmony burst upon my ear—voice and lyre mingling together.

The song was Margaret’s own composition; it was in the language of her native country—a wild irregular ode to Italy, which reminded one of those patriotic addresses which the Welch harpers were

wont to pour forth, in days long buried in the sepulchre of the past. The following translation will convey to the reader but a faint idea of the energy, the pathos, and the delicacy of the original.

MARGARET'S SONG.

I.

"I turn my face towards the south, for that way lies the home of my fathers — the land wherein I was born, and wherein she, who bare me lies buried. Oh! that I could borrow the plumage of a bird, or sail from realm to realm upon the bosom of a silver-rimmed cloud floating across the azure heavens, and I would voyage towards thy bright shores, radiant Italy, land of the sun!"

II.

"I pant for my native fields; I am consumed with an unquenchable thirst. I am even as a bird in a cage, who longeth to fly away. Why do they keep me here? This ungenial clime turneth the blood of my veins into ice. But in Italy, in my beloved father-land, the sun glows warmly like the feelings of a youthful poet; the air is soft as the voice of love; the sky above — the clear hyaline is deep blue, like the eyes of a seraph — all things are beautiful there."

III.

“In Naples was I born ; there did the tide of life first circulate in these veins ; there did I first become sensible of the pains and pleasures of vitality ; there was my first tear shed. Alas ! how many have I shed since ! There were these lips first moulded into a smile of infantine delight. Why may I not return thither ? I am an Italian ; I feel it within me ; this cold western island has nothing in harmony with my soul.”

IV.

“The city sleeps at the foot of the mountain ; the blue rippling sea laves the margin of its dædal streets ; the aspiring mountain-peaks of the giant Vesuvius mingle themselves with the heavens ; a mighty turmoil is stirring within, like that which swells the bosom of a proud man, who would rank himself with the gods. Further on lies the buried city,—wondrous record of past ages. I see all these things with the eye of my fancy, but I am forced to live afar off. Alas ! why was I born a Neapolitan ?”

V.

“I pine — I wither — I am dying, a captive in a great prison-house. I shiver with cold, I am girt

about with ice. I wander here and there, but all is dark and desolate. My soul harmonizes with eternal nature. How can I be joyous in this place, where every thing around me is so drear? I speak in the language of my country; it is my only solace, I have none beside it. I am a wretched outcast. Why was I not cut off in my infancy? It is better to die in Italy, than to live any where else in the world."

The song was scarcely ended, when a loud rap was heard at the outer door. "It is my father," exclaimed Margaret; and she rose up and quitted the instrument.

CHAPTER VIII.

A friend of mine, you rascals ! I was never wearier
of doing any thing than kicking these foot-balls.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

Would the dust
Were covered in upon my body now !
That the life ceased to toil within my brow !
And then these thoughts would at the last be fled ;
Let us not fear such pain can vex the dead.

SHELLEY.

MARGARET was quite right. Mr. de Laurier presently entered, and his daughter went up to salute him. He saw that she was much excited ; but *he* saw at the same time that she had just quitted the instrument, and, therefore, he took no note of her excitement. Margaret was always agitated when she had just left off playing on the harp.

I did not tarry very long after Mr. de Laurier's

return. I was soon in the open air, on the way to my uncle's house ; it was not quite eleven o'clock ; and it was a fine, dry night : but I know not whether the moon shone or not : the gas-lights were very luminous.

I was certainly the happiest fellow in the world. I would not have changed places with the greatest monarch in the universe. I said to myself an hundred times, " I do not deserve this—what have I done that I should be singled out for the enjoyment of such exquisite happiness?" Then I thought of Margaret and of all that had passed ; it was like a dream of incomparable bliss. Could it have really happened, or was it not a mockery — a delusion ? No ; it was a beautiful reality ; and I was blest with the love of Margaret de Laurier.

But there was one little drop of bitter in the cup which had cost me a momentary pang. There was one little cloud in the vast firmament of my delight, which had passed for an instant athwart the sun, and overshadowed it ; but the little cloud was soon blended with the blue ether, and all again was unchequered serenity. A strange thought flitted through my brain as I crossed Mr. de Laurier's threshold. I know not how it was, but I asked myself, " Can it be, that Margaret de Laurier is — *mad*?"

I remembered something that my uncle had

said about madness, when speaking of her mother; and I thought it not wholly impossible that the germs of an hereditary insanity were implanted in Margaret's constitution. But the thought was so very frightful, that I laughed at it as a fanciful fear; I discarded it; I would not believe it; and in a moment I was as happy as ever.

"No," I said, as I walked along the street, "of a certainty she is a peerless creature. Kings might be well contented to lay down their crowns at her feet. Margaret, — rightly called Margaret. Is she not 'a pearl of great price?' — and she is mine; mine for ever! Heaven has witnessed our vows; Heaven..." I know not exactly what would have been the continuation of my rhapsody, if I had not heard a great noise — a confusion of tongues — just before me; and looking up I saw upon the pavement a small concourse of people engaged in a popular contention, or in more emphatic English — *a row*. I was in unusually high spirits, and I should not have been afraid, at that moment, if a legion of giants had assaulted me. Love is a great help to valour; and I was prodigiously courageous just then, because I was immensely in love. "There is a row here," I said, "excellent chance!" and singing out in chivalrous accents, a stave of Mr. Dryden's celebrated Pindaric,

“ None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserve the fair !”

I advanced towards the scene of action, to ascertain whether my services were required.

I soon became certified of the fact, that the combat was raging very furiously ; and as the combatants were three in number, I concluded, as did Squire Western of old, “ that two of them must be on a side :” but as I could not, at first sight determine the party which it behoved me to attack, I became a spectator for a few moments, before I became a participator in the affray.

I was not long before I perceived that too very dubious, raffish-looking fellows were belabouring a gentleman of some figure, who was making a vain resistance against the numerical superiority of his opponents. Of course there was a woman in the business ; but it grieved me very much to see, that, belying the amiability of the sex, she was encouraging the stronger party, and, with a variety of stimulative expressions, exhorting her geminous champions to “ knock the very life out” of their companionless enemy. It would ill become the modesty of this history to record even a fragment of her vituperative eloquence, which was of that order usually distinguished, amongst classical writers, by the title of Billingsgate, and which an

accurate narrator would describe, as being "more energetic than delicate."

The single warrior maintained his ground with much gallantry against his cowardly opponents, who fought very bravely in company, without regarding the laws of single combat so scrupulously as it became them to do: for discretion had gained the ascendancy in their bosoms, to the entire exclusion of chivalry, which they looked upon as Quixotic, absurd, and unworthy of the encouragement of wise men. There is nothing like policy in the world, thought they, as they fell upon their enemy in concert, and made up by their numbers for what they wanted of valour and address.

It was fortunate for the solitary hero that just then I was pugnaciously inclined. "Fair play! gentlemen," I cried, "two to one,—that won't do, my friends," and, clenching my retributory fist, I portected one of the united assailants such a tremendous blow upon that part of the face which lies between the nose and the mouth, that he measured his length on the pavement, with a small addition to his comforts, of a schism in his upper lip, which laid his front teeth most unbecomingly bare. Then turning myself towards the other barbarian, I extended him such a kick upon his dorsi-lateral extremity, as sent him half-way across the street, where he was knocked down by a cab, which hap-

pened at that moment to be driving past, at the very illicit rate of twelve miles an hour.

It was a fortunate circumstance that the scene of warfare was one of the least frequented thoroughfares in the metropolis,—a street so quiet and respectable, that none but quiet and respectable people were ever expected to pass through it, or the historian might have enjoyed the felicity of spending his night in the watch-house.

However, the fates were inclined to smile upon the gallantry of my pugilistic achievements; and it so happened, that having disposed of these two ruffians, and having seen the damsel who acted as their squire, very sedulously employed upon endeavouring to raise one of the fallen heroes, I laid my hand upon the arm of the gentleman whom I had rescued from the assault, and, saying to him, “Come away,” I persuaded him to accompany my flight.

But, unfortunately, my new friend had the “reeling infirmity” upon him, or in other words, he was so drunk, that he could not keep the straight line of march with any degree of exactness. Indeed his progress was so very circuitous, that, like poor “Smug, the smith,” he was thrown about, “from (lamp)-poste to (lamp)-poste, and from wall to wall: here he knocked his face against one stock, there against another, till half the

wilde blood in his body was runne-out at his nose.”*

“ This won’t do at all,” I said, and drawing the arm of the Bacchanalian gentleman tightly within my own, that he might have the advantage of my superior steadiness, I looked into the face of my companion, and who should he be, but Lord Leicester ?

I was very much astonished at this discovery. What could have brought Leicester to London in the middle of September ?

“ What ! Leicester !” I exclaimed : “ then, indeed, I have battled to some purpose.”

“ Yes,” said my drunken friend, “ Leicester, my name’s Leicester,—who says it is not Lord Leicester ? and you, sir, who the devil are you ? what business have you to take hold of me ? D—n you, sir, I’m Lord Leicester, a peer of the realm ; hark you, sir ! who the devil are you ?” I asked his lordship where he was hanging out, but he only repeated the question—“ You, sir, who the devil are you ? What right have you to ask me that question ? D—n me, I’m a better man than you,—a peer of the realm ; hark you ! I won’t tell you where I live—I won’t—I won’t ! I’ll see you d—d first.”

* *The Life and Death of the Merry Devill of Edmonton, with the pleasant pranks of Smug the Smith, &c. &c.* 1631.

“Come, Leicester,” I said soothingly, “none of this nonsense, my dear fellow, I am an old friend of yours—I am!—my name is Claude Jerningham!”

“Jerningham! you Claude Jerningham! d—n me! I tell you, sir, you lie—”

“Look at me,” I said, well aware that until I had established my identity, I should have no power over my inebriated companion. “Look at me!” and as we were just then directly under a lamp, I set my friend’s back against the post, and suffering the gas-light to stream upon my face, I bade him scrutinize my features, with all the accuracy, which his condition might admit of.

“D—n me,” he cried,—“and so it is—Claude Jerningham, as I live;—beg you ten thousand pardons;—my most beloved friend;—curse it all. I’m not quite right—screw’d, screw’d, Jerningham. Hang it, my boy, accidents will happen. I’m a little screw’d, an’t I? Well, well, Jerningham, I’m not so *very* bad. Let’s come to the ‘Finish.’”

I declined the invitation, in a peremptory tone; and Leicester continued, as we advanced. “Curse it, but you are a brave fellow; you pitched into them in fine style, you did:—those cowardly poltroons—two to one, Jerningham, ’twas a shame; and all about a woman, too, confound it,—a woman: ’twasn’t worth fighting about, when there are so many women in London, all to be got with-

out fighting. Come away, Jerningham—come, come,—a woman for ever!”

“Nonsense, Leicester; you shall come home with me; and I’ll see you well taken care of. *Allons*, my boy;—only two more streets, and you shall find a safe resting-place. Hock and soda-water to-morrow morning; we keep a bachelor’s house.”

“Hock and soda water!” cried Leicester. “Well, well; you are a capital fellow. Curse it, but I *am* screw’d: that d——d fellow’s early dinner!—that ever I should be sewn up before twelve o’clock!”

And thus bemoaning his unhappy condition, the inebriated young nobleman arrived safely at —street, under the guardianship of his old school-fellow.

It happened that my own servant, young Watson, who had attended me into Devonshire, answered the summons of the door-bell, and having admitted his master and master’s friend, he smiled, for he could not help it, and said something about the “white room.”

“Yes, Watson, you have anticipated my orders. Has Mr. Jerningham come home?”

The boy’s answer was in the negative.

“Come, Leicester,” I said,—“shall I show you the way to your room?”

“Room!” replied his Lordship, “not yet;—curse it, do you think I’m drunk? No, no; that’s what I call d—d inhospitable;—it is.”

I told him that I meant the drawing-room, and that if he would oblige me by walking up stairs, which he might do by aid of the balusters, I would order up a bottle of Burgundy and some prime Manilla cheroots.

“That’s what I call reasonable,” cried Leicester, and having followed me up two flights of stairs, I deposited him safely in the identical “white room,” the mention of which had excited his indignation. It was precisely the same thing to him ; he did not discover the fraud I had practised on him. I gave him a gentle push, and he flounced into an arm chair, cushioned with softest down, and apparelled in a white coverlid.

“D—d comfortable chair, this,” cried Leicester, and in a few minutes he was asleep.

I heard my uncle’s rap ; and leaving my friend to the enjoyment of his slumbers, I entered the drawing-room in high spirits ; but my uncle was not there, so I went down to seek him in the library.

“Ah ! Claude my boy,” exclaimed Matthew Jerningham,—“home so early, and how is this ? Tired of *La Belle Marguerite* ? How thrives your amour ? ”

“Most favourably, uncle,” I replied ; “but really its no matter for a jest.”

My uncle seemed to coincide with me, for he

looked unwontedly serious. "Then you *have*—" he said, but he checked himself suddenly. "I have no right to ask you this question. I should not have spoken thus lightly had I thought that your acquaintance with Miss de Laurier had led to any thing more than a flirtation. Claude, I am no inquisitor. You are at liberty to change the subject. Have you heard that there is a schism in the cabinet, and that * * * has quarrelled with his colleagues?"

"My uncle, my dear uncle," I cried, "I have no secret which I can desire, one moment, to conceal from you;" and I told him, that although I had not proposed to Margaret in set form, that I considered myself quite as much bound to her as if I had made a regular offer of my hand.

I looked into my uncle's face: there was something of sorrow in its expression. He seemed partly to sympathize with my delight, and partly to grieve for my sake. I could not at all interpret his feelings; there was joy, but there was inquietude mingled with it. However, nothing could have been more truly satisfactory than the explanation, if we may judge by its immediate results. My uncle declared that, if it was my intention to marry, he would make me a handsome allowance, adding that I must not, on any account, think of returning to India.

I certainly had no desire to pass through "the burning fiery furnace," a second time. My heart overflowed with the abundance of my gratitude; and I should have uttered a thousand speeches, expressive of thankfulness and love, if my uncle had not positively declared that he would not hear a word on the subject.

I then acquainted my uncle with the circumstances of my pugilistic adventure; and concluded by informing him of the honour I had conferred upon his house, by introducing Lord Leicester to its shelter. My uncle laughed heartily. "Well, then, I will not detain you; I dare say his lordship stands in need of your assistance. Run up; and put him to bed."

I did as my uncle told me to do, and then I betook myself to my chamber. The next morning, before nine o'clock, I went to visit my patient, with a bottle of soda-water in one hand, and a clean shirt in the other. To my great astonishment, the room was deserted, and on the writing-table I found the following note:—

"MY DEAR JERNINGHAM;

"Pray excuse my abrupt departure: but the truth is, that when I woke this morning,—with a dreadful head-ache, by the bye,—I remembered that I was engaged to breakfast, with some friends,

twenty miles from the metropolis ; so I stole away, without being so cruel as to rouse you from your morning slumbers. But how can I sufficiently thank you ? — you have fought for me ; you have rescued, you have sheltered me. Tell your uncle that I hope he will not judge me too unmercifully ; nor think that I add to my offence by sneaking off in this cowardly manner ; for my engagement is of such a nature, that I could not very easily absolve myself from it. I must have been *very* drunk last night ; for I slept, until morning, in the chair. Once more, let me intreat you to forgive your always affectionate, and now cursedly seedy, friend,

LEICESTER."

" Well," I said, " this is very explanatory. He might as well have told me where to find him. — However, to compensate for my disappointment, I will go and see Margaret after breakfast, and in the evening, ha ! 'tis well : — I had almost forgotten Delaval ; — ' this day week,' — said he not so ? — Yes : I will be with him to-night."

The ingenious reader, judging by the contents of the last chapter, will imagine some of the pretty things which were said at our next lover's meeting, and kindly follow the historian on his way to Mr. Delaval's lodgings, which were

situated, as I have before said, in the vicinity of Chancery Lane.

The hour agreed upon for our interview was seven o'clock, P. M. ; by which time, darkness had enveloped the thousand streets of the dædal metropolis, or would have done, if the ubiquitous gas had not rendered it "as light as day." I had taken an early dinner, and, punctual to the appointed minute, I stood before the bookseller's shop. The last few weeks of my existence had been so full of stirring adventures, I had witnessed such a variety of scenes, I had communed with such different characters, I had acted so much, and reflected so little, that my nerves had assumed a vigorous tone, and I felt that, whatever embarrassment I might labour under, I was capable of comporting myself with manly decision and energy. There is nothing like a stirring life to corroborate the nervous system.

The bookseller's door was open, and I walked unannounced through the shop. I bounded nimbly up the stairs which led to Mr. Delaval's apartment, and had already reached half-way towards the summit, when I ran against a person descending. The staircase was very narrow ; and the collision was unlooked for by us both, although a lamp, on the uppermost step, shed a faint light almost to the bottom. But the light was

uncertain and flickering, for the lamp was but ill supplied, and appeared to be on the point of expiring; so that neither the stranger nor myself were conscious of the advent of one another. We both of us apologized simultaneously, and whilst we were doing so, I had time to examine, though but imperfectly, on account of the glimmering light, the person of the individual I had come in contact with. I had been struck by an unpleasant dissonance in the voice of this man; there was something in its tones which suggested a suspicion of their being fictitious; and when I began to scrutinize his appearance, the unfavourable impression which I had derived from this circumstance, was rather increased than diminished. That the individual I now saw before me was "the strange-looking gentleman, in black," whom the bookseller had surmised to be a clergyman, I could not hesitate immediately to determine. He was a tall man, but his figure was concealed by the ample foldings of a dark cloak; and a slouching, broad-brimmed hat, drawn downwards, in a suspicious manner, overshadowed the upper portion of his face, and baffled all attempts at identifying him. Yet, in spite of this very scrupulous disguise, I thought that the individual before me was one whom I ought to have recognized. He had spoken to me, and there was a

peculiar expression about the mouth of the stranger, as he spoke, which had certainly struck me heretofore, but which I was unable to associate distinctly with the person of any particular individual. It was, however, but a vague impression, and the likeness might have been imaginary, especially, as the person I now saw had an immense pair of black whiskers, which is at all times such a striking characteristic, that the wearer is not liable to be mistaken.

However, as I passed on, and continued to ascend the stairs, I said to myself, "Mr. —, your discernment is none of the shrewdest. This man is no more a clergyman than you are. I'll be sworn to that!"

I entered Mr. Delaval's apartment. He had left his bed, and, apparelled in a loose dressing-gown, he was walking up and down the room. His step was firmer than I could have expected it to have been; but he was evidently much discomposed. There was a writing-desk open on the table, and a purse lying empty by its side.

He stood still, when he beheld me at the door, and before I had closed it after me, he cried out, in an eager tone: "Did you see him? did you meet with him? speak!"

"I met a man upon the stairs," said I, unconcernedly; "but I took no particular notice of

him. We very nearly knocked each other down ;—and I put on a forced smile.

“ Ha !—I had forgotten. It is well ;” soliloquized Delaval, in an under tone ; then, turning towards me, he extended his hand, and resumed in a more distinct voice : “ But why need I conceal it from you ?—Have I not promised that I would tell you my history ? Yes ; and you shall know all,—all ; but, *not now*. Do not think me uncourteous. I thought, that about this time, death would be sitting by my couch ; but I am better, much better to-day ; and I would not willingly survive the disclosure, which I have promised to make before I die. However, if I mistake not, my friend, your suspense will be short-lived indeed ; the lamp is but throwing out a few bright rays ere it expire for ever. There, Jerningham, sit you down ; perhaps you will not disdain to pass an hour or two with me this evening. I feel in the mood for society ; and, by the way, Jerningham, do you ever drink *wine* ? Here is a kingly beverage here, a drink fit for the gods. Burgundy,—‘ right noble Burgundy.’ Thus spoke King Lear in the play,—ha !—I am merry to-night ; drink ; what shall be the toast ?—whom shall we pledge, eh ?—I drink *water* to-night ; but I will bear you company ;—there ; your toast ; quick, I have filled.”

“ One, whom you used to love ; nay, if I mis-

take not, whom you still love,—*Henry Lord Leicester.*”

Delaval started from his seat; his face was deadly pale; his whole look was full of emotion; he was wrenched with a sudden agony. I thought that he was about to strike me, so fearful was the expression of his countenance,—so impassioned his whole deportment.

“Why such a toast as this?” he exclaimed, glaring at me with a furious significance. “Jerningham, why name him in my presence? Do you wish to turn my agonies into a mockery,—to torture me? By the living God, if an angel were to come from heaven, and—fool, fool, fool!”—and he suddenly relaxed the energy of his speech,—“fool that I am; do I not know that he is dead, and that another now reigns there in his stead? I had forgotten; I will drink your toast; yes, Jerningham, and with pleasure:—The *present* Lord Leicester, and may the branches flourish, the root being under ground.”

We sate for a few minutes in silence. I passed the wine-bottle towards him, but he shook his head. Presently he rose again from his seat,—traversed the room once or twice, and then resumed his former position. I made some casual remark. Delaval was now quite calm, and made answer in a rational manner. One observation

conducted to another, and a conversation ensued (if that can be called conversation, where one speaker is but rarely interrupted)—so brilliant, so diversified, so profound, and yet so elegant, that I fain would record it in these pages, if I were not conscious of my inability to do it justice.

Hour after hour slipped away, and I took no note of time as it went, until the clock of St. Dunstan's struck twelve, and Delaval arose from his seat.

"It is long,—very long," he said, "since I have prosed away so much of the enemy. I fear that I have kept you from your bed, mine has long ago been expecting its tenant. I am weary of talking, and I'm sure that *you* must be weary of listening to me. Ah!—but how is this? your bottle more than half full at this late hour of the night! I hope, Jerningham, that you do not find it, 'waterish Burgundy,' as the King of France called the suitor of Cordelia."

"No, indeed," I replied, "it is exquisite; but I rarely drink much out of company.—By the bye,"—and I was about to mention my adventure of the night before, but I checked myself, because I thought it would be ungenerous to expose Leicester's delinquencies,—“by the bye, are you so complete a water-drinker, as never to indulge in wine,

with the produce of such a vineyard in your cellar? But I suppose, you are forbidden by your physician to taste this *aurum potabile*."

"A man, who has no desire to live, cares little about the edicts of his physician. I *do* drink wine, Jerningham, and I love it; but at the same time I fear it, for it mounts up into my brain, and asserts its supremacy there. I keep it as a drug to excite me; and sometimes, in the hour of despondency, I fly to it, as to a powerful friend, who can solace me with the oblivion I desire; but this is only when I am *very* wretched, when my thoughts are altogether insufferable,—when the intensity of my agonizing feelings is so great, that I tread the verge of insanity,—then is it that I drink wine. It maddens, it intoxicates, but it saves, me. Do not think me a drunkard, Jerningham; when you have felt as I have felt, you will excuse me. Desperate sufferings require a desperate remedy. Thus speaketh Lemuel in the Scripture:—

"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

I had thrown my cloak over my shoulder, and was just upon the point of departing, when Delaval detained me for a moment, and putting a small book into my hand, he said, "Keep this for my

sake ; it is not a very valuable gift, but as the old Greek has written—

Δεχου φιλον γε δωρον εκ φιλης χειρος.

I have turned down a page which I would have you read : remember the lines which I have underscored. I shall be glad to see you at any time ; and now good night.”

I opened the volume before I went, and just glanced at the title-page. It was a copy of Bacon’s Essays.

“ Perhaps,” said I, when I had reached home, “ I may find something in this book which will throw a light upon the vagueness of my conjectures,— some key which will unlock the blue chamber of this mystery.” So I opened the volume, where the page had been inverted, and read the following passage, which was underscored with red-ink.

“ Cosmus, Duke of Florence, had a desperate saying against perfidious or neglecting friends, as if these wrongs were unpardonable. ‘ You shall read, saith he, ‘ that we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but you never read that we are commanded to forgive our friends!’ ”

I went to bed that night as usual, and I dreamt of Cosmus, Duke of Florence.

On the following morning, whilst I was a

breakfast, a note from Delaval was put into my hands :—

“ My dear Jerningham,—

“ The excitement of last night was too much for me. The physician tells me that I am in a high fever. Be it so ; my hour is come. Haste to my lodgings, or you will be too late ! For the last time I sign myself

“ DELAVAL.”

I was not slow to obey the summons. In half-an-hour's time I was at Delaval's lodgings. The sick man was lying upon a couch ; his face was slightly flushed ; but the colour was a presage of death more ominous than the ghastliest pallor. A bible was resting on one of the cushions : Delaval put it into my hand ; it was a large *Family Bible*.

“ Ah !” he said, “ you are just in time. I thought once that I might write my history ; but I could not : I *raved* upon the paper ; perhaps I shall rave now ; but the presence of another person will, in some measure, restrain me, I think. Solitude is the nurse of delirium. Well, do you see nothing there ?” And he pointed to some writing on the fly-leaf of the book, which I held in my hand. “ This bible belonged to my father ;

it has not seen the daylight for years. I had a reverence for the book, and I liked not to destroy it; but I feared lest it might become a witness against me. What name do you see written there? —*not* Delaval, methinks; right—Henry Moreton: he was my father! Ah! look you lower down: that is the record of my birth. Well, what is it? you have come at my proper name now.”

“*Godfray Moreton!*”

“Right! and now you shall listen to my history.”

CHAPTER IX.

List a brief tale,
And when 'tis told, oh ! that my heart would burst.

SHAKESPEARE.

“ My name is Godfray Moreton. My father was a man of some eminence in the law, and possessed of considerable property at the period of my unhappy nativity. I was his only child ; and my entrance into the world was ushered in by an act of homicide. My mother died in parturition. I never knew what it was to be fostered by maternal affection,—‘ love foreswore in my mother’s womb.’ On the threshold of existence, I was greeted with curses and lamentations.

“Jerningham ! if you wish to know the source of all my errors and misfortunes,—these are mild terms—I ought to say, of my guilt and desolation ; I

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will tell you, without delay, that I owe my fall solely to the unnatural susceptibility of my senses. From my childhood upwards, I have been the victim of passions so easily awakened,—of feelings so easily acted upon,—that a word, a look, a circumstance in itself most minute and insignificant, when relating, either directly or indirectly, to me, has ever possessed the power of elevating or depressing my spirits,—of making me an angel, or a monster, in a second. I looked upon every thing, as it were, through a magnifying glass. Nothing whatever escaped me. I had no mean. I was always immoderately wretched, when not immoderately joyous. My days were without twilight; when the splendour of the sun had departed, darkness came suddenly on,—black, thick, and impenetrable. Childhood was not with me a season of thoughtless and unsorrowing innocence: if my stature had kept pace with my passions in their growth, I should have been a giant in the very spring of my boyhood. A word of unkindness from my father cut keener than the lash would upon others. He never smote me, for he was not cruel; peradventure, I should have hated him had he done so. And yet he was not kind; at least not as a parent should be to his child,—an only parent to an only child. But I made allowance for the conduct of my father; I felt that my birth

had been to him the source of unparalleled misfortune; and I thought that the apathy, which his conduct exhibited, might have arisen more from habitual despondency, than from any unkindly intentions. ‘Alas! my son,’ he would say, ‘you know not what you have lost in your mother:’ and then I clung to him weeping, and upbraiding myself for having been the innocent cause of his affliction. Then he would address me in language akin to the touching words of Cadmus to Agave* —

Τι μ’ ἀμφιβάλλεις χερσιν, ὦ ταλαίνε παι;
and I would answer,—‘Oh! my father, because I am wretched, and I know not well what I am doing.’

“I always delighted in books; but I read them not as other children are wont to do. I wept over them,—I laughed over them,—I transported myself, in imagination, to the scenes which were described in their pages! I read of love, and I longed to be beloved,—of friendship, and I desired to have a friend,—of fame, and I cried out with enthusiasm, ‘Why, too, should not I be famous?’—I never shall forget the effect which the perusal of ‘*Wilhelm Meister*’ wrought upon me before I was ten years old. The character of *Mignon* enchanted me; for

* See the “*Βακχαι*” of Euripides.

“Why do you throw your arms around me thus, thou wretched child?”

days and nights I thought of nothing else. I fancied that in her I was presented with a feminine incarnation of myself; and I would have given the whole world, had I possessed it, to meet with such an exquisite being upon the theatre of actual life. I imagined her about my own age, and, like me, a creature of sensibility; and I marvelled at the dullness of 'the apprentice,' in preferring a colder beauty before *her*.

"I was about thirteen years of age when my father dismissed me to Eton. I was intended for an Oppidan, of course. My tutor was graciously pleased to compliment me upon my specimen heroics, and I was posted to a higher class than I had any reason to expect. My *dame* was a certain Mrs. A——; she had once been naturally a beauty; she was now artificially one, and boasted of certain royal amours. I was agreeably surprised when I was introduced, for the first time, to this worthy matron. I had expected to meet with a lodging-house-keeper; and I was astonished at being received by a lady. She was all smiles and civility; and my heart clave to her immediately. I had my room fitted up in a great style, though God knows I cared little about it; — a Brussels carpet on the floor — a series of sporting prints round the wall — and last, though not least in importance, that most certain of all appen-

dages to an Eton boy's establishment — that *multum in parvo* — a bureau.

“Jerningham, in the same house with myself, there was one boy, whom I loved, as I never wish to love again. When I look back now, as from an eminence, upon the earlier scenes of my existence, I confess that I am strangely at a loss to account for the intensity of that youthful passion: not that it were the smallest wonder that a heart so susceptible as my own, should have loved with a fervour of attachment, such as few have generated: it would have been a wonder if I had not loved; and that too, with the whole strength of my spirit: but why did I love *him*? There were others more worthy of my affection; and yet I thought not that; I compared nobody with him; he was all in all to me, and my eyes were shut to the perfections of others. He was very beautiful: his person first struck me with admiration; I admired without speaking; I was contented for awhile

‘To look upon his beauty — nothing further.’

Need I say that I soon sought his acquaintance? His manners confirmed my attachment—they contained the very essence of gentleness; so mild, so easy, so naturally, so spontaneously elegant; I never have seen such perfect refinement in one so

young and unwitting. And yet there was no foppery, no art ;—*then* he had not learnt to dissemble ; *then* he was no other than he seemed to be. He was not gifted with genius ; I should not have loved him so well if he had been. He was an apt scholar when he applied himself to study ; but he had no thirst for knowledge, as I had — no ambition — no desire to distinguish himself. I liked him the better for this ; I loved him for the extreme softness, I may almost say the apathy of his disposition. I had enough of the tumultuous in myself ; I wished not to find it in my friend. No two individuals could have possessed more opposite qualities. He was like unto a placid lake without a ruffle on its surface. I to the wild ocean, heaving, restless, and never the same.

“ Seek you to learn his name, Jerningham ? seek you to know who was my friend ? He was the father of one, whom you know — the father of the present Lord Leicester !

“ He gave up his other companions for me ; he took delight in my society, and I was happy. My devotion was so entire, that to please him I would voluntary have endured the most exquisite bodily torture ; I lived only in his happiness ; my greatest enjoyment was to spend all my pocket money upon small offerings, with which I might present him. When I was pennyless I ran in debt ; I

cared little about the means, so long as I won a smile of gratitude from Leicester. I firmly believe that had no other resources presented themselves, I would have played the felon's part, rather than that he should have wanted the smallest trifle. To hear him express a wish was sufficient ; speedily his desires were gratified ; I thought of no other happiness for myself, but that which was a reflection of Leicester's. And he clave to me, so that we were rarely ever apart ; we played together ; we read together ; we wandered by the side of old Thames ; we plunged naked into its depths ; or skimmed along its surface in our row-boats. I cared not upon what we were engaged, so long as Leicester was my fellow-labourer. I would have followed him through a fiery furnace ; I would have sat beside him happy in a desert. We were indeed always together — abroad in the meadows, or sitting by our little fire at home ; on the same side at cricket, or striving against one another in friendly contention at fives ; we were indeed the Valentine and Proteus of Eton,

‘ And wheresoe’er we went, like Juno’s swans,
Still went we coupled and inseparable.’

“ But I dwell too long upon these scenes ; my tongue runs riot in these luxurious paths ; and in vain I try to check its exuberance. When I talk

over that which has been, the spirit of rejuvenescence breathes upon me. I am as it were re-born; and the light of a by-gone happiness reanimates my shrouded vision. I talk wildly, my friend, but it may be that you will comprehend my meaning. Oh, Jerningham! when hope and memory are to you but as a heaven obscured with clouds of the darkest hue and the most threatening aspect—when in all this portentous and horrible mass, but one little glimpse of light, like an eye in the face of the firmament, is visible to your inquiring senses; you will know what it is, as I do, to fix your gaze upon that one bright spot—to concentrate the rays of your vision upon that solitary glimpse of splendour—to shut out the surrounding darkness by making that little star the focus of your compressed sight. You remember that beautiful story, in Boccaccio, of the young maiden who buried the head of her murdered lover in the Basil Pot, and watered it every day with her tears, and gloried in the noble possession, and thought of nothing else, and lived for nothing else, and was happy in the midst of her desolation, because the head of her beloved was there; what the sweet Basil Pot was to the young maiden is the memory of my boyhood to me. Do you remember the beautiful paraphrase of this story by one of our sweetest modern poets?"

I asked him if he alluded to a poem written by Barry Cornwall upon this subject, by name, I think, the *Sicilian Story*.

“ Oh ! no, no, not that ; I speak of a worthier than he ; poor Keats !—I knew him when I was at Rome. His was a gentle and lovely spirit ; and his sweetness was exhaled from his misfortunes ‘ like the fragrance of crushed herbs.’ Hark you, Jerningham ; how beautiful is this, how true ! I have felt it all :—

‘ And she forgot the stars, and moon, and sun,
And she forgot the blue above the trees,
And she forgot the dells where waters run,
And she forgot the chilly Autumn breeze ;
She had no knowledge when the day was done,
And the new moon she saw not : but in peace
Hung over her sweet Basil ever more,
And moistened it with tears unto the core.’

——“ Where there is love there is jealousy, and I was very jealous. I was most entirely my friend’s, and I desired that he should be wholly mine. I liked not ‘ a corner in the thing I love.’ I had concentrated my own affections into one burning focus, and I called upon my friend to do the same. I was foolishly, absurdly jealous. Whomsoever he smiled upon I hated ; I could not bear that he should be a moment out of my sight. I almost wished that he would turn misanthrope, and, me

excepted, hate the whole world. It was not enough that he should love me better than all my school-fellows; I required that he should love me alone. My jealousy made me suspicious,—I surrounded myself with monsters of my own creating; and was eternally doubting the sincerity of my friend. I made myself wretched by this,—I watched him closely, and interpreted, or rather misinterpreted, the veriest trifle into a symptom of indifference—

‘A something light as air—a look,
A word unkind, or wrongly taken;’

and I became miserable,—feverish; my ‘heart fed upon itself.’ He smiled upon me—spoke kindly; and called me his ‘dear Moreton’ (Christian names, not even amongst brethren, are made use of at Eton), and straightway I became a demi-god in happiness; my spirits rose at once from zero to blood-heat. I looked into his face; I marked every motion of his features; my feelings ebbed and flowed with the changes upon his countenance. I detected a thousand things in his look which assuredly were not at his heart. Nay—do not mistake me, I mean not that he had taught his features to lie; I mean that my morbid temperament saw many things that had no existence but in my own sickly imagination. I saw not ‘good in every thing,’ I saw evil in every thing.

“ This could not last. One day I taxed him openly with ingratitude. I remember not the combination of circumstances which had made me more than usually suspicious; but my jealousy could keep silence no longer; and my pent feelings spoke out at last. I soon became conscious of my injustice; the tears stood in poor Leicester's eyes; he had long been aware of my suspicions; he told me that he had been so; he now accused me of unkindness; he said that it was unfeeling in me to use him thus. I saw that he was indignant at the charge, but he was not loud in his indignation. I felt that I had done wrong, and tried to say something conciliatory; but thereby I only aggravated my offence. ‘ Moreton,’ said he, ‘ you have an enemy in yourself; your own sickly fancies play the Iago to your better judgment. I have for some time been aware of your distrust. It was cruel in you, Moreton, to doubt me. But now that you have cast me off, I have only to wish that you may find a friend more deserving of your attachment, though you will never find one to love you better. From this time our friendship is at an end; I know that I am altogether unworthy of you: I know that I am without merit; I never pretended to any, but that of being your friend. There is a wide field before you, Moreton; may you be happy in your choice !

“ Leicester walked away ; his back was turned towards me, and I saw not his countenance ; presently he stopped and threw himself down beneath the shadow of a large tree ; his hands were before his face, and his breast was heaving ; I saw no tears, but I heard him sobbing ; and I knew that he was violently moved. I was going towards him to intreat forgiveness ; but I paused, and said to myself, ‘ No ; not now,’ and then I turned back and left him there alone in his sorrow.’

“ I had no sleep that night. I was tormented with self-upbraidings. I had not only done wrong, but in doing so I had ruined my happiness. I was a knave and a fool at the same time. I had not the common consolations of knavery ; I had profited nothing by what I had done. On the contrary, I had recklessly dashed the cup of happiness from my lips. I had nobody to blame but myself. I had been the suicide of my own happiness ; and the thoughts of my misdemeanour were actually insupportable to my mind. So I resolved to make an effort at reconciliation. On the morrow I wrote to him. I confessed my error ; I said that I was conscious of my injustice. I made use of every plausible argument that I could call up. I pleaded my own excessive love as the main cause (and in this I spoke the truth) of my jealousy. I entreated him to forget what

had passed. I told him that I was wretched without his society—that his companionship was necessary to my existence. I said that I could never cease to love him; I poured out my heart fully; my letter was replete with passionate eloquence. An answer came; I have never parted from it; there, read it yourself.”

“ You ask me, Moreton, to forget what has passed; but, indeed, you ask that which is impossible. Yet, believe me, although I cannot forget, it is still in my power to forgive. I *have* forgiven you, heartily and sincerely; I never can bear you enmity, nor forget that you have once been kind to me; my feelings towards you will remain unaltered, though my conduct henceforward must be different. We have parted, Moreton, and we must continue to live apart. Remember, that perfect confidence is necessary to a perfect friendship; you have ceased to put trust in me, and I am too proud to endure any longer to be an object of ungrounded suspicion. It is better that our companionship should end here. Seek for another friend, and in his society you will forget

“ LEICESTER.”

“ Jerningham! before I proceed further, I must pause to speak of the family of my school-fellow. I have as yet only spoken of him as Leicester: he

was *Lord Leicester*, but we take little notice of titles at school, conventional distinctions are dropped there. The peer and the commoner jostle on together: the son of the earl must succumb to the son of the tradesman, if the latter has the advantage of seniority. Leicester had succeeded to the title almost in his infancy, for the father had died but a few years posterior to the birth of his son. There was one other child born, a daughter, ere he was summoned to eternity; that daughter, perhaps, you know: she is the present countess of ———. Geraldine Leicester was but a year younger than her brother: of her I shall have occasion to speak anon. Lady Leicester, the mother, was still alive, and she doated, with reason, upon her son. Great, indeed, was the privation she underwent, when she consented to part from him, and if it had not been the express desire of her late husband, that the young lord should be educated at Eton, Lady Leicester, like most other mothers, would have preferred a private tutor for her boy. Leicester, whilst our friendship existed, was in the constant habit of showing me his mother's letters. They were the most affectionate, and at the same time the most judicious it has ever been my fortune to peruse: they breathed the purest spirit of fervent but well-regulated love; I formed the highest opinion of her ladyship's head and heart from

my knowledge of this correspondence, and if I had not been the veriest dolt in existence, I might have learnt the sincerity of her son's attachment to me, from the perusal of these letters. There was in each one some allusion to our friendship, betokening her full knowledge of every incident connected with it, and from the manner in which Lady Leicester spoke of me, it was evident that my friend had depicted me in the highest terms of warm-hearted encomium.

“ But let me return to my narrative : when I received that letter, and he restored the manuscript carefully to his writing-desk, my heart sickened within me, I knew not what to do—I was in despair—I resolved to form no other friendships. The love that was once—nay, that was still Leicester's—I determined to lavish upon no other. Oh, how lonely were my hours—how miserable the burthen of existence ! I retired to my bed, at night, happy that the day was over, yet dreading the dull, desolate monotony of the morrow. I had nothing whatever that I could look forward to—the very prop of my existence had been taken away—‘ the fountain from which my current ran ’ had been dried up. How then was I to live ? What then was there to be done ? I cursed myself time after time—my mean paltry suspicions—my pitiful jealousy—my cruel injustice. I had no sophistries to

call to my assistance—I saw at once the full extent of my wretchedness, and the whole sum of my errors. I walked up and down the streets the incarnate figure of desolation, and I exclaimed with the patriarch Job—‘To him that is afflicted pity should be showed from his friend.’ But for me there was no pity—for me there was no consolation! I felt in the midst of my afflictions that I deserved them all to the full, and this was the crowning curse—‘the most unkindest cut’ of all that I endured.

“As for Leicester, I watched his conduct as narrowly as I could do unobserved, and in so doing, I not only added to my meannesses, but I multiplied my sufferings also. For whatever might have been his behaviour, there was nothing in it which could possibly, under any circumstances, have afforded me the slightest consolation. If I had marked in him an appearance of indifference, my self-reproaches would have abated their vehemence, for the injustice of my conduct would have been rendered less palpable; but then it would have been equally painful to have had my suspicions confirmed, and to have been impressed with a belief of Leicester’s unworthiness. If, on the other hand, I had seen that the poor boy took the matter seriously to heart, the converse of this would have been the case. On either side wretchedness glared upon me—to feel that I had wronged, or that I had

been wronged, by a creature whom I loved so devotedly, I knew not which would have been most replete with affliction. But in this case I was most entirely mystified; I knew not, in the least, how to determine upon the conduct of my alienated friend. He laughed—he played—he entered with apparent enthusiasm into all the sports and amusements of the school: he was an admirably skilful cricketer—he feathered an oar with considerable address, and was one of the best swimmers within the boundaries of Eton. He had for some time past almost wholly abandoned these pastimes, so that he might devote himself more entirely to me, and if ever, during the season of our intimacy, he had indulged his innate fondness for amusement, it had always been at my suggestion, or rather, at my earnest entreaty. But now he entered fully into the spirit of all frolic—he was the life of every game—the very soul of Eton's abundant joyousness—he was as one who had burst from a dungeon, and broken his fetters into pieces, emerging into the light of day, and luxuriantly inhaling the fresh air—he was as a bird just escaped from the cage of its ensnarer, caroling in the lithe atmosphere, and winging through the realms of space, unrestricted, free, and untrammelled. He increased daily in popularity—he rose in the good opinion of his schoolfellows, for the boy that devotes him-

self to *one* can never be a favourite with the *many*; young as he was he began to *lead*—he was then in the fifth form; I think in the middle remove; but as he advanced higher in the school his indolence had diminished ‘not a jot.’ He was still very idle, and was no favourite with the tutors—the rod spares not nobility, and Leicester was no coward; fear could not drive where inclination could not tempt, and the young lord abhorred study; his whole soul was in his pastimes.

“*Was, did I say? Then I have not spoken the truth; the soul of Leicester was not in his pastimes; it only appeared to be there. But I saw through it all. He was but a poor dissembler; good enough to deceive the multitude, but not to deceive me. In the midst of his apparent cheerfulness, I saw that he was not happy; I knew that he was acting a part; I could have sworn that his joyousness was unreal; there was an effort in his laughter,—a straining in his mirth,—*

‘An affectation of a bright-eyed ease,’

joined to a mental abstractedness, which I could plainly perceive, when, apparently to all beholders, he was intent upon a particular occupation. I had not watched the changes upon his countenance month after month together, without being able to read them aright.—‘*Quam multa vident pictores in*

*naturâ quæ alii non cernunt.**—How many things do painters see on the face of nature, which by common eyes are ever disregarded!

“And yet my knowledge extended no further.—I knew that Leicester was wearing a mask; but the real state of his feelings up to the present hour I have never ascertained. Whether he was anxious to deceive me, and to mortify my vanity by a show of indifference,—whether, upon reflection, his indignation at my conduct had gathered strength, and he wished to revenge himself upon me for my injustice, and really to be what I had madly accused him of being,—or whether, in truth, he was stung to the quick, and endeavoured to banish the recollection of what he had lost, and at the same time to conceal his wretchedness from the unfeeling eye of the community, by plunging into a vortex of boyish dissipation and excitement, up to this time, I have been unable to discover.—But this I know, that his cheerfulness was a mockery. The bacchants laugh in the midst of their fiendish orgies; they tear each other limb from limb, and shout joyously as they do it. I once saw a man noisy and merry over his cups; he had sharpened

* This is a mis-quotation from Cicero.—The passage, I think, runs thus; though I also am necessitated to quote from memory:—
“*Quam multa vident pictores in umbris et in eminentiâ quæ nos non videmus.*”

the razor before he left home, and killed himself that same evening.

“It was in the beginning of July, some months after our rupture, that I was walking one day along the banks of our river,—the beautiful, the arrowy Thames, companioned by a volume of poetry and a dog, that had now supplied the place of humanity to me. My eyes were tracing the printed lines of the book; but my thoughts, they were not with the author. I raised my head for a minute, to catch some of the warm air upon my forehead, when, not far in advance of me, I beheld a crowd collected upon the edge of the river. I felt no particular curiosity to ascertain the cause of this assemblage, and most probably I should have walked on, without asking any questions on the subject, had not a straggler come suddenly up with me, panting and hurrying eagerly on, to join the stream-side congregation. He was a class-fellow of mine, one whom I saw daily in school, but with whom I rarely assorted out of study. He knew nothing of my breach with Leicester, or he would not have addressed me as he did:— ‘Holloa, Moreton, what on earth are you doing here, looking as unconcerned as King Henry in the chapel, when your Pythias is about to decide a wager, to make good his claims to the Leander-ship of Eton? Surely you must have heard that

Leicester is to swim from the place, where you see the crowd, to the bridge and back again, without touching land, and that Gordon has laid a considerable wager against his doing it within a certain time, and has taken the odds about his doing it at all.—Will you bet, Moreton; my good fellow, you back your friend, of course;—what odds will you offer?”—And he pulled out his table-book, in anticipation of a wager.

“‘On my word’ I replied, ‘I know nothing about it; I am altogether ignorant, I assure you, of Leicester’s proceedings; and rumour has not even told me that this feat is to be attempted.—However, that Leicester will accomplish it, I entertain not the slightest doubt; for I have known him to swim further than this, ere now, with apparent ease. But you may restore your tables to your pocket, for I am not in the habit of betting.’

“We joined the assembly, and made part of the crowd. Leicester was on the water-side, laughing and talking as he undressed. He appeared confident of success;—there was an unusual flush upon his cheek, which the excitement of the moment had called up. Conscious that he was the centre of an admiring crowd,—the focus of every eye,—the engrossing subject of every thought,—he felt that kind of active pride which stirs in the bosom of a gladiator, as he enters the arena for

the first time. Presently, he had thrown off his last garment, and stood prepared to plunge into the element, beautiful as Narcissus of old, when he looked into the reflecting water, and drank the poison of his own loveliness. But just as he was on the point of leaping into the waters, he paused for a moment, and, looking round to give some directions to his *fug*, about the safe disposal of his clothes, his gaze fell upon me, and the interchange of glances which followed, told that we were conscious of the presence of each other.—Leicester's cheek blanched for a moment,—a cloud passed over the sunshine of his countenance; it was but a momentary pallor,—it was but a transient cloud; for, ere I had time to speculate upon what *his* thoughts might have been at that instant, a loud splash in the water told me that Leicester had taken a header into the Thames.

“Swifter than an arrow from the archer's bow,—swifter than the memorable shaft with which Smintheus desolated Greece,—swifter than the eagle's wing, or the wild boundings of the lightning-footed roe, the young swimmer breasted the waters, — on, — on, — on!

“With hair that gilds the waters as it glides, and white limbs glancing through the azure flood, his form dwindles in the distance, — not an eye that is not straining, not a heart that is not beating. —

Will he do it? — Will he accomplish the task? — Breathless suspense reigns over the gazing multitude. — There; — there; — there; — mark him; — he is afar off, — can you see him? — he has reached the bridge, — he looks like a white foam-flake, tossed on the surface of the waters, no larger than a white speck, or a distant sail against the blue horizon. — What is it that glitters so in the sun? — It is the golden hair of the swimmer. — He has turned. — Vah! vah! this is no holiday-task; he moves not with the torrent now; the rush of waters is against him, but he is fresh, fresh as a bridegroom, and the energy of his efforts is unabated. — Ha! he is coming, he is coming; his figure swells into distinctness. Onward, onward! like a proud ship stemming the tide, he comes; every stroke is visible. He nears us, he nears us! — God help him: he is weak, he is exhausted, yet he is strong in courage; there is exultation graven on his countenance. — He will do it, — he will do it! — yes! — the goal is not far off: yet oh! how he pants, how he struggles! but a few strokes more, and 'twill be done. — It is done: — no, no; I see him not: — where is he?"

Having said this, Delaval fell back, utterly exhausted, on his couch. For awhile he lay supine and motionless, like one in whom the functions of life have been suspended by some sudden

visitation. The breathless rapidity of utterance, with which he had given vent to the feelings contained in the latter part of his narrative, had prostrated his physical energies, and the memory of the scenes he was describing, torrent-like, had overwhelmed his intellect. I have endeavoured, as nearly as possible, to imitate the manner of the speaker. He spoke as one describing present events, which he sees, as from a high watch-tower, and communicates to those beneath him. Remembrance was to him as the mirror of the arch-magician, Cornelius Agrippa, and painted upon the retina of his mind, scenes, dragged from the sepulchre of the past, as vividly as if they were actually imaged upon the surface of his visual organ. But Delaval recovered himself, ere long, and taking up the broken thread of his narrative, he continued, in a low voice, betokening extreme debility.

“Leicester’s strength deserted him, utterly, just as he was on the point of reaching the goal, in triumph; he had felt that it was failing him for some time, but his courage, stronger than the muscles of his frame, impelled him forward, though but slowly, for a while. He was determined not to be vanquished whilst his limbs retained the faculty of motion. He struggled onward, but it was all in vain. He might have reached the bank, but he would not, for such

would have been an inglorious defeat: 'No, no,' he said inwardly, 'my will shall not yield to my body, in perseverance. If my limbs fail me, I *can* go no further, but till then, ——' he thought nothing more; he could think no more; for the stream closed over his head, and the waters gurgled in his ears, as though every cavity of his brain was full of the bubbling element, and darkness came over his eyes; and understanding fled from his senses; and he was as a lifeless thing in the bosom of the swollen river. The powerful stream which he had been combating, carried his body upon a retrograde course. I saw him sink, as did others; but the feelings, which they experienced at the sight, were blank and meaningless, as compared with mine. Many were hard by the spot where he sunk; but none attempted to rescue him from the death,—I know not how it was,—I never knew how it was, but there was not a boat nigh,—a strange want of caution indeed; but it was so, and I cannot account for the accident. But I paused not to debate upon probabilities,—Leicester, my still cherished, though alienated friend, was in the most fearful and deadly peril. Death was asserting his prerogative over the swimmer, yet no one stretched out a hand. 'Oh! that I had been a few paces nearer;' but the event proved the vanity of such

a wish. The tide carried him from me ; but this was nothing. I threw off my coat, and in a moment I was in the bosom of the waters, out-stripping the rapid tide, in hot pursuit of my drowning friend, who was born along, like a withered branch, or any other powerless thing, by the stream. But I was no contemptible swimmer. I exerted my concentrated energies, and soon reached the drowning body. I stretched forth my hand ; but it eluded my grasp ; it sunk ;—oh God ! how my heart sickened within me ; but I dived beneath the surface of the flood ; I encountered the precious burthen I sought after ; I clasped it nervously with one of my arms, whilst, with the other, I struck out for the bank, shouting and bellowing like a madman in the overstrained extremity of my joy. But when I stood upon the solid earth, bending over my inanimate friend, a violent re-action of feeling overtook me. I asked myself, in fearful suspense,—‘ Do I embrace Lord Leicester in my arms, or am I encircling a lifeless corpse ?’ My extenterated mind was oppressed with the gloomiest, the most horrible forebodings. My reason suggested the very worst ; and my nature, never of a very sanguine complexion, refused all intercourse with hope. I was half frantic ; but there was method in my madness. I chafed the chilly limbs of the drowned

boy. I rolled him backwards and forwards along the mossy turf. With an unnatural effort of strength, I suspended him, head downwards, in the air,—I clutched him as Thetis clutched her son, when she immersed him in the waters of Styx. Then I restored him to his supine posture, and resumed the business of chafing his limbs. I allowed no one to assist me; a multitude gathered around, every one willing to help, now that there was no danger, and little trouble in the task; but I rejected every offer with fierceness; and my school-fellows could but acknowledge the right of the prerogative I asserted. I succeeded, Jerningham; I succeeded. His eye-lids unclosed for a moment, and his chest slightly dilated,—verily, I had my reward. If I were to live until the last trump shall summon the dead from their graves,—if my doom was to be as that of Ahasuerus, the monster who smote Christ, and who heard that tremendous ordination,—‘Tarry thou till I come,’—the unbounded ecstasy of that moment,—the unearthly delight which thrilled through my whole frame, and made music in the recesses of my soul, will never pass away from my memory. It was as though the happiness of a thousand lives had been concentrated into one moment of unparalleled bliss,—it was as though my spirit had been suddenly bathed in the waters of Elysium; and

tasted of joys, which are not of earth—but divine, hallowed, and glorious in their brightness.

Like the glimpses a Saint has of heav'n in his dreams.

“This was the focus of my happiness, all the rays of my apportioned bliss centred at that point, and kindled into a flame of ineffable splendour, which blazed with an effulgence intense as it was brief, and then expired, never again to illuminate my obscured soul.

“I have told you how I rescued Leicester from the perils of a watery grave. His frame, as may easily be supposed, had received a severe shock from the accident; and some time elapsed before his physical powers re-assumed their original tone. I attended him during his confinement; I watched by his bed-side; every hour of the day that my scholastic duties did not prevent my attendance, I was stationed by Leicester's couch,—anticipating his every want, performing the most menial offices; taking the most infinite pains to enhance the sufferer's comfort; and making myself as nought, when weighed in the balance against my friend,—never was a gentler nurse,—never a more unwearying watcher,—never a more devoted attendant. I scruple not to say this; because the vein of self-complacency, which runs through my narrative, as compared with my self-upbraidings, is

as a small island stream to the mighty waters of the sinuous Nile. But, in this instance, I deserve praise; for I sacrificed my own health in my eagerness to restore that of my friend. The unbroken intensity of my vigils exhausted my strength after a while,—I took no sleep,—I even neglected my meals,—I deemed that I was sinfully remiss if I absented myself from the sick chamber for an hour. Air and exercise no longer renovated me; every moment of the day was passed in watching and study; nay, I devoted myself but little to the latter. The consequence of all this, as may easily be supposed, was, that as Leicester waxed daily in health, I was sinking into the slough of disease.”

Here I interrupted the speaker, to ask him why Lady Leicester, whom he had described as such an affectionate mother, did not, upon learning her son's accident, repair at once to Eton, that she might nurse him.

“I should have told you that,” resumed Delaval,—“but that my egotism got in the way of it. Lady Leicester was not in England at the time. She was absent, with a party of friends, upon a brief Continental tour, and she had so apportioned her daily travels, as to reach her home only on the day preceding that on which her son's vacation commenced. That vacation was now almost present; and I joyed to think that Lady

Leicester would be apprized of her son's recovery at the same time that she became acquainted with his accident; so that the feelings which the intelligence would communicate to her would be less those of sorrow than of gratitude to the Fountain of all good works, and the Giver of all good things.

“As for Leicester, his thanksgivings were unbounded—not to Providence,—but to *me*. Is there aught sweeter in the world than the voice of gratitude to a thirsty heart? If there be, I know it not; I have found it not;—and I wish for nothing more exquisite. But, Jerningham, will you believe it, that though Leicester loaded me with thanks—though his expressions were of the most hyperbolic nature—though he rarely ceased from his acknowledgments, and called me by no other name than that of his saviour, or his preserver, I thought his gratitude was most inadequate; and that his thanks were pitifully insufficient. Wild, devilish notions took possession of my brain—a fiendish voice whispered in my ear,—‘He loves you not: it is all hypocrisy.’ I certainly had conferred upon Leicester the greatest benefit that one human being can receive from the hands of another; and I deemed that this circumstance would be sufficient of itself to cement our broken attachment. But it was not so. Believe me; it was not so.

The reiterated gratitude to which Leicester gave vent bore the impress of feelings which might have been awakened, had the veriest stranger rescued him from death; they bore not that exclusive stamp, which I expected my individuality to have moulded them into;—they had nothing individual about them;—they were couched in vague, general terms, expressing a full sense, it is true, of the vast obligation he was labouring under; but further than this I recognised nothing. My seal was not set upon his gratitude,—my image was not uppermost in his thoughts,—I expected the eye to brighten,—the bosom to swell,—the whole frame to dilate with rapture, when he was told that *I* had saved him. But I saw nothing of this. Nay; I thought that the cup of his enjoyment was dashed with some bitter reflections, for I observed a cloud to pass over his brow, when first apprized that *my* hand had rescued him. Oh! how the thought maddened me,—how my heart sickened to the death,—how my hopes were crushed into annihilation! Yet I hated him not for all this. My love survived the wreck of my peace; and sat amidst the ashes of my joy. My time had not yet come; and I was still the same, doating fool, though the veil of delusion had been rent in twain, and I saw that Leicester cared not for *me*. But I nursed him,—I watched over him,—I

tended him ; and I quitted not his side till the vacation tore him from me and relieved me from the charge.

“ I went to my father’s home, broken down in body and in mind. But Leicester came not to see me ; neither did he inquire after me, though I was in a perilous state, fearfully conditioned and desolate ; my flesh wasting from my bones, and my intellect prostrated by delirium. It is true that the mother wrote to me, but what had her son to do with that ? But I must hurry on with my story. I recovered—I was restored to health by a skilful physician. Again I returned to Eton ; again I moved on the same stage with Leicester.

“ We became once more the most inseparable companions in Eton ; but we were never *friends* again from that hour. Oh ! no ; our connection now was but the ghost of our former friendship — we played with one another — we read with one another — we walked with one another — *but our souls communed not*. We were two bodies linked together by fate ; but further than this there was nothing — nothing which spoke of the union that had been. It would have been impossible, situated as we were, to have moved both of us, upon the same arena, with an outward semblance of indifference, palpable to the senses of all around us. It would have been too unnatural — too inexplica-

ble a sight to manifest to such as understood it not. This it was that drew us together — we felt that we ought to associate — that the world would marvel if we did not — that we should wonder at ourselves if we did not; and we both of us tried to believe that still we were all-in-all to each other. We neither dared to utter our misgivings—but the sophistry would not act—we attempted to smother the truth, but the effort was very idle — we tried more to cheat ourselves than to delude one another; but it failed. Self-delusion is a spontaneous thing. We knew what was the reality; but we parted not.

“ How inexplicable the excursions of the mind —how unfathomable the ordinations of fate—how wild the wanderings of the affections! But a few short weeks and the most fervent—the most engrossing love—had been chilled into the coldest indifference. I often amuse myself by endeavouring to develope the progress of this change—to distinguish each link in the chain of altered feelings—to discern the bridge of twilight over which I passed from light to darkness. But I leave off unsatisfied with my endeavours. I went to Eton a child of sensibility, enamoured of beauty both natural and intellectual. I have already told you that an ideal creation first excited my boyish love; I dwelt upon this

circumstance, because, in some measure, it served to illustrate the state of my moral organization at that time. My soul was exceeding thirsty—my heart was craving for an object unto which it might cleave—and in the absence of a material reality it clung to a phantasy of the brain. Perhaps you will now understand the condition of my mind, when I was entered at Eton, and fully account for the extravagant passion which I conceived for my first friend. The connexion which I then formed, influenced the whole future tenour of my life. There is nothing strange or unaccountable in this; it would have been marvellous had the consequences been otherwise. The void in my heart was full—full even to the overflowing. I drank even to intoxication the precious wine for which my soul had thirsted. My moral fabric was now completed; and I was no longer the crude fragment of a human being, which I felt myself, ere I loved and was beloved. Had the first object of my young attachment been a creature of the opposite sex, my love would have strengthened as I approached maturity; the development of my intellect, and the increase of my knowledge, would have presented me with certain new, and undreamt of, combinations, relating to the constitution of love, which, whilst they wrought a change upon the nature of my affections, would

have served to strengthen them, as I advanced in years, until the possession of their object would have become the all-devouring principle of my existence. But as the circumstances of my fate were woven, the converse of this was the case. Years diminished the warmth of my attachment. As I ascended the hill of life, age and experience weakened my ardour. Knowledge pointed out to me that my enthusiasm was something strange—uncommon—and unnatural. I looked around and saw none like me. I heard the name of “friend” bandied about from mouth to mouth—the word was upon every tongue, but I looked in vain for the substance ; for I sought for something like unto my own, and then I looked upon myself as an isolated creature whose feelings were not as those of my fellows ; for their friendships were temperate and sober, whilst mine was full of passionate intoxication, and then I looked upon myself as a silly creature because I was unlike to the rest of the world. The freshness of my sensations wore away—the bloom of my first affection was destroyed—the world and the world’s littleness had touched it—and it was as fruit which had passed through many hands—contact had soiled its beauty. And then the ignorance which is bliss forsook me ; the mist of delusion passed away ; I had tasted of the tree of knowledge ; and I saw

corruption with too clear a sight. What once I regarded as perfection discovered a thousand blemishes; stainless purity became spotted as the pard: the cheek of health ulcerous and bloated; the honeyed voice harsh and discordant. Then I despised myself, because I had been imposed upon—because I had walked in the shadow of credulity—and I shut my eyes; and I tried to cling to the old belief; but it deluded my grasp, and mocked me. Alas! a change had passed over my feelings: and certes, it was not for the better.

“But I must drop metaphor, and leaving my high place in the clouds, employ once more the language of humanity. This ‘damnable iteration’ creeps upon me; and I utter a number of big words, all signifying nothing. To tell the truth, Harry Leicester was not destitute of faults; but he had many and great excellences. He was ‘gentle but not fearful;’—he was firm, resolute, and little selfish. But had his virtues been most transcendant they must have fallen far short of the value, which I fixed upon them at first sight. I thought that in Leicester I contemplated the very essence of all perfection. It is the nature of love to form hasty conclusions, and to make subsequent discovery of its error. Thus it was, unfortunately, with me. ‘Truth,’ says Penthea in the play, ‘is the daughter of old time;’ and long

acquaintance taught me to scrutinize too nearly the qualities of my friend. I viewed them with a microscopic minuteness. I explored the very pénétralia of his character. From effects, I betook myself to causes ; I endeavoured to sift his motives, and to unravel the perplexities of his nature. Nor was this all ; as my sight became keener, the defects of my friend became more prominent. Years which had sharpened my faculties, more strongly developed the weak points of Leicester's character ; and failings, little unbecoming to the child, became glaring and monstrous deformities when they exhibited themselves in their more advanced stages. In addition to this, age brought to light many qualities which had hitherto lain dormant ; his character coming in collision with the world, struck out the sparks of undeveloped vices : his intercourse with men corrupted him ; he bowed to 'busy opinion,'—the meddling fool,' who is the sworn foe of truth ; and quitting the natural for the conventional, became an artificial worldling. I loved him not the better for this.

“ But still we claved to one another. The link that bound us together was of the most subtle and inexplicable nature. There was some strange sympathetic attraction existing between us, though the elements of each were discordant. You must already be weary of my analytics ; therefore I

will pass on to more stirring events. Leicester acknowledged inwardly the power I possessed over him ; he was spell-bound, if I may use such a word. I had *saved his life* ; this was the spell, that precluded the possibility of his regarding me altogether with an eye of indifference. He might hate me ; he might fear me ; he might fly from me ; but, whilst life lasted, he could not forget me. Perhaps my destiny was parallel to this ; and what I have spoken of as indifference was disgust. I come now to tell you, Jerningham, how a principle of the most withering hatred entered into and desolated my soul.

“ We remained at Eton a year, I think, after the date of Leicester’s accident. We parted, each for our respective homes,—with no sorrow,—with no regret : I regarding Leicester as a shameless ingrate ; he looking upon me as a suspicious and exacting tyrant, whom he tried in vain to love, because it was his duty to do so ; though he always turned sickening from the task, having discovered in me fresh deformities. And in truth I was not made to be beloved ; my passions were so monstrous that they threatened destruction to all whom they alighted upon. It was not safe to be within the pale of their influence. God forgive me, for the magnitude of my errors ! We parted : we rejoiced in our freedom ; but we did not hate one another.

“From school we were destined to remove to the Universities. Leicester was a free agent: I was under the dominion of my father. *He* tarried till I was entered at Oxford—at the very College that he would have selected; but he took advantage of the priority of my choice, and betook himself to the other University. I was not sorry for this. Whilst at Oxford, my father died; and I became heir to a large property.

“At the period of my father’s demise, I was entering my twentieth year; but I might easily have passed current, in society, for an older man. Thought and passion united, had destroyed the sleek freshness of my countenance; and the joyous openness of youth was absent from the expression of my features. Yet, withal, I was of a comely person.—(Alas! my friend, *Troja fuit.*)—The lineaments of my face disposed themselves into a striking, and not inelegant, outline; the contour of my figure was graceful and flowing; and my hair, before much suffering had thinned it, was luxuriant as the locks of Absalom, ‘who weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels, after the king’s weight,’—and ‘it was heavy on him.’ My whole appearance may be said to have been rather picturesque than beautiful.

“I was not ambitious of shining in society; and yet my nature was of a social complexion. My

disposition was not attuned to solitude; and I durst not trust myself to the companionship of my own distorted reflections. When I say that my soul was not in harmony with solitude, it may be that I am perverting the truth. I loved not society for itself, but for the influence it possessed over my soul: the soothing power,—the gentle attributes,—which, like oil poured upon the sea, tranquillized the tumults of my bosom. I went abroad in the world: I mixed with my fellow men: but it was not spontaneous in me to do so; it was an effort which I felt bounden to make; so I made it; and, for awhile, I was rewarded. I became social by habit. Habit is the effigy of nature: it is as the mask of the Roman actor, which he wore until his features caught its likeness. But I followed not the mimic calling enough: and the *persona* was torn from my face by a hand which I could not resist. The silver veil was raised at last, and the hideousness of Mokannah became visible.

“ I entered the world endowed with many and great advantages. Providence and fortune combined to favour me. I was spoken of as a ‘rising young man:’ for I had distinguished myself highly at the University, and I had money to buy a seat in Parliament. I became gradually admitted into what is called the first society. I had taken a ‘box ticket’ in the great theatre of life. My wealth was, in a

great measure, my passport to society ; but wealth alone would have done nothing. I had been educated with the high-born of the land ; for Eton and Christ-Church are the very hot-beds of aristocracy. In addition to this, I was, doubtless, a young man of considerable talent. This may raise a smile at the expense of my vanity ; but the man who writes himself a villain, can afford to say that he is clever.

“ I was one evening at a ball in the metropolis, when I was introduced to Lady Leicester, at her own especial desire. I had never met her ladyship before ; and now I was beyond measure delighted by the gentle affability of her manners, and the kindly expression of her countenance. ‘ Mr. Moreton,’ she said, extending her hand, ‘ you must allow me the privilege of an old friend, to wave all ceremony, upon this occasion. Yes, I say, an *old friend* ; for, although never, until this night, have I had the pleasure of personally conversing with you, I have esteemed you amongst the dearest,—and certainly the most real,—friends I possess in the whole world. You will know to what circumstance I allude so well, that I need not name it ; for it must be a painful subject to us both. That we never have met until now, you will do me the justice to acknowledge, is not to be attributed to my fault. But now, that we have

once been brought together, let us make a covenant, and set our seals upon the bond. Methinks that you can hold out no longer: the favour which, as a boy, you denied me, as a man I am determined to force from you. I must see you at — Castle. I am imperative; you cannot refuse me. We start for the country next week, and—Henry will be so delighted to see you.'

“ ‘*And Henry will be so delighted to see you!*’ I started, and my cheek blanched; and my frame trembled. A myriad of jarring sensations rushed through my soul as she spoke. What was the import of this sentence? I hoped, and feared, and doubted. I was overwhelmed with the most anxious incertitude. I knew not how to interpret the words,—*and Henry will be delighted to see me.* Could it be possible that Leicester still loved me? I laid the flattering unction to my soul, and yet I could scarce believe that I was not deluded. To tell the truth, the last year had witnessed a strange alteration in my feelings. When I saw Leicester every day, the sensations with which I regarded him were very much akin to disgust; but now, I had lived so long apart from him, that I had forgotten all that was unpleasant in the acquaintance, though the delights of it were still fresh in my mind. The defects of Lord Leicester's character, which so offended and annoyed me when at Eton,

now that they ceased to affect me, were obliterated from the tablets of my memory; and the conduct which I looked upon as warrantable, when the evil part of Leicester's nature alone presented itself to my diseased vision, was remembered with the bitterest feelings of self-upbraiding remorse, when I reviewed, with dispassionate judgment, the details of my illiberal behaviour, and the most insignificant cause of my great injustice and disingenuousness. I no longer magnified every circumstance. I beheld truth for the first time; and the effect of my unprejudiced deliberation was, that my affection for Leicester revived; that I regarded myself as a contemptible wretch, and him as an innocent sufferer.

“ ‘ Mr. Moreton,’ resumed Lady Leicester; for, with great disregard to politeness, I had fallen into a deep reverie,—‘ I am waiting most patiently for an answer. But I know not why I need request one; for silence, you know, gives consent; and, therefore, I shall look upon you as engaged. Henry is not here to-night. But I see my daughter approaching to join us.—Geraldine, my love, this is Mr. Moreton. Is it not fortunate that we should have come here to-night?’ And a low musical voice replied, ‘ Indeed, I shall ever esteem it a fortunate circumstance to have become acquainted with one to whom we are so deeply indebted.’

And I looked up and I beheld Geraldine Leicester.

“ I need not tell you how beautiful she was; you have seen her, and may judge from what she is, the incarnate angel she resembled at eighteen—
‘ From the crown of her head to the sole of her foot there was no blemish in her.’

“ She sat down beside me, and we conversed; we spoke of her brother, and discoursed of his character: she understood it better than I did. She said that his greatest fault was pride; she regretted the aristocracy of his feelings, and feared that it might render him unpopular in after-life; never was a more open and kindly heart—never a more maiden-like demeanour than Geraldine’s. When I looked into her sunny face, and listened to her silver voice, and communed with her as a familiar friend, I saw that she was like unto her brother—

Her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all to the very tone
E’en of her voice:
But softened all, and tempered into beauty.

“ Geraldine was all candour and sincerity—‘ To tell the truth,’ she said, ‘ I am weary of dancing night after night the same dull, monotonous, insignificant employment; surely we were made for something better than the silly evolutions of eternal quadrilles. But, perhaps, I am offending

you by my strictures, and am abusing one of your highly-cherished tastes, but you do not look like a dancer.' 'Nor am I,' I exclaimed, delighted to find that our feelings harmonized, at least, in *one* respect. I accepted the invitation to — Castle.

"When I say that I *loved* Geraldine, you will know well enough *how* I loved her; in truth, ever since my intimacy with Leicester, I had cherished a wild, ideal, fanciful, affection for the sister of my chosen friend. I often imaged her person in my mind, and thought what might be the lineaments of her face. But now the reign of imagination was over, a beautiful flesh-and-blood creation was presented to my enamoured sight, and the phantasy, which my brain had coined, was dim beside the lustre of the reality.

"I will not tell you, with diffuse prolixity, how my love of Geraldine Leicester ripened into absorbing intensity; I will not tell you with what feelings I encountered Leicester at — Castle; I will not dwell upon the nature of the league which we formed upon the threshold of manhood—nor anatomize Geraldine's character—nor enter into an analytical exposure of the great joy which burst upon my soul when for the first time I thought that she loved me. Let it suffice to have touched upon these things: the progress of my courtship was serene and successful; Lady Leices-

ter regarded my advances with complacency ; I may venture to add, and with delight ; the saviour of her son's life would be a fitting husband for her daughter : the cup of my enjoyment was filling, when suddenly it was dashed to the ground, never again to be replenished.

“ During my visit to — Castle, I was reading one day in an inclosed summer-house, whither I had resorted, anxious to escape the infliction of some morning visitors ; it was a beautiful summer's-day, ch ! I remember it well ; there was sun-shine over the glorious landscape, and there was sun-shine in the recesses of my soul, and I thought that I had never been so happy, as I lay at full length in that summer-house reading, and yet hardly reading, for thought was more rapid than vision, and my brain outstripped my lazy-pacing eyes ; then my soul was calm and undisturbed as the waters of a pellucid lake, and my gigantic passions slept, and I was harmless and tranquil as an infant in the grandeur of its gentle slumbers. And when I listened to the rustling of the trees, and the music of the many singing-birds, and looked upon the thousand flowers which encircled my pleasant retreat, and inhaled their aromatic fragrance, it was as though a differently-ordered spirit had entered into my individual body, and that the transfusion of souls

had been accomplished ; for all the beautiful things of the earth unfolded their charms to my sight, and I regarded them with a quiet eye, and I was happy, and I felt as did the ancient mariner when he looked upon the insects of the deep, and ‘blessed them unaware.’

“ But, alas ! with what a fearful rapidity my blessings were converted into curses ; my rejoicings into bitter lamentations. As I lay stretched upon the sofa in the alcove, a sound of many voices approached me : as the speakers drew near unto my retreat, I discerned several strange tongues, but Leicester and Geraldine were in the group, and theirs were familiar tones. I concluded that the party consisted of the visitors, whom I had purposely shunned, and who, attracted by the fineness of the day, had accepted Lord Leicester’s invitation to stroll about the gardens and park. With the exception of our young host, all the talkers were of the opposite sex ; and, as they drew close to the summer-house, I heard distinctly the words that they uttered. The first articulate sentence convinced me that they were talking about *me* : for they were bantering poor Geraldine.

“ One of the party, with whom it appeared I was acquainted, had been asking whether I had ridden out, as I was not visible in the house. ‘Oh ! ask Geraldine,’ said Leicester, ‘she is better ac-

quainted, than I am, with Mr. Moreton's movements, I can assure you,'—and then all laughed but Geraldine. 'But is it really true,' said one voice graver than the rest, and which emanated from a more elderly speaker; 'but is it really true, Geraldine, my love?—bless me, how the poor girl blushes!'—'Is *what* really true?' asked Geraldine, in a tone of effeminate fierceness:—'Your question is so vague, that it would puzzle a wiser head to answer it.'—'You have eyes but see not,' said a third speaker, and this scriptural quotation raised a laugh. 'Nay, nay;' interrupted Leicester, in a firm and decisive voice;—'every jest ought to have its limits,—and, in this case, I will take it upon me to answer for my sister Geraldine. There is not a word of truth in the silly reports which have gone abroad. *My* sister would not demean herself by marrying,—God forbid'—*the son of a pettyfogging attorney*. Geraldine has more respect for the station in life which she occupies,—Geraldine has too much sense to degrade herself by such a match.—Geraldine has too much affection for me and for Lady Leicester, to injure us by such sinful folly. But Geraldine, independently of this'—'Brother,' interrupted Geraldine, 'I know not by what right, you assume to be my spokesman. Though a woman, I am not so helpless a creature as to be unable to answer for my-

self. Henry, this is unkind,'—and poor Geraldine wept. But Leicester was not to be intimidated by a few womanish tears.—'What right do I assume?—why, every right in the world,—the right of an elder brother'—'Hold, hold,' cried Geraldine, 'you are not my brother, I am sure,—my brother would not treat me thus.' But Leicester, heedless of her agony, continued,—'Right,—why question you my right,—am I not Lord Leicester? am I not the head of the family,—whose hitherto unsullied renown I would wish to keep free from blot,—am I not all this? Why, Geraldine, my sister, you are beside yourself.' But Geraldine only wept.

"I had heard quite enough of this. The fiat of my doom had gone forth. I was undone, and there was no hope for me. A tremendous sentence had been passed, misery now and for ever. My soul, which so lately had distended itself, now shrunk and withered, for it was scorched; and the springs of love and joy within me were dried up by a great fire, and there was a hissing in the cavities of my brain; and I was as one possessed by the furies.

"But outwardly I was quite calm. I did not curse my enemy, but *I hated him*. My inward agony was too intense to have any outward symbol to accord with it. I went forth from the summer-

house, with a light step and a careless demeanour; I passed by the group of talkers, for I had no object in avoiding them. I saluted the party with a bow and a smile, and some casual observation as an excuse for my not joining them. Then I went into the house; and having been admitted to Lady Leicester's *boudoir*, I acquainted her with my intention of immediately quitting —— Castle; I told her that my determination was not to be shaken; that it was no sudden freak upon my part; but a necessary consequence of her son's behaviour,—‘Good God!’ exclaimed Lady Leicester, ‘my son? what has he done?’—‘Madam,’ I said, ‘he has insulted me!’—‘Merciful heavens!’ cried the baroness; ‘tell me, Mr. Moreton, I beseech you,—what has my son been doing? What has my son been saying? And you have challenged him: tell me, Mr. Moreton.’ ‘Lady Leicester,’ I replied with most admirable self-composure, ‘I beseech you not to lose your equanimity. Had I challenged, or purposed to challenge your son, this interview would not have been between us. No, madam; he is quite safe; the life which I once preserved is in no danger of being assaulted by me. But the wrong which I have this day endured banishes me for ever from —— Castle. I cannot trust myself to tell you what has passed; but your daughter Geraldine

will explain the circumstances which have driven me to this conduct. I go; my horses are waiting for me; the great courtesy and kindness which you have bestowed on me will never, Lady Leicester, be forgotten. Think of me with benevolent feelings, and desire your daughter to do the same; for me you will never see again,' and I quitted — Castle for ever.

“ I rode to the nearest town, and shut myself in the chamber of an inn. I hugged my desolation, as I would a friend, and there was some joy in the plenitude of my wretchedness. Hitherto, like the Spartan boy, with an unshrinking frame and an unaltered aspect, I had suffered the wild beast beneath my garments, to feed upon my entrails, and I was silent; but now I had thrown aside the robe, and I took a kind of curious pleasure in watching the operations of the creature, and marking the progress of my torture, whilst I encouraged the animal in his task. I repeated the words I had heard. I thought upon the full import of each. I extracted their utmost venom; and there was no dearth of the poisonous juice in them. I said to myself ‘What am I, that I should be exposed to the taunts and insults of every lordly whipster? What have I done that I should be outraged, and disgraced, and spit upon, and made a mark for the finger of scorn? And

who is he, that he should dare to do it? Is his body of a finer texture than mine; is his skin sleeker: his muscles more compact; or does his blood flow in different courses? I see it not; I am his fellow man, fashioned by the same hand, moulded from the same dust. What is he then that he should presume to scout me? Is his intellect of a more subtle organization; is his soul capable of greater extension; is his knowledge more ubiquitous than mine? Methinks, I am wiser than he. What have we not then in common? He has strength; so have I. He has beauty; and am I deformed? He has knowledge, have I not more? He has wealth; so have I. Then, in that one little word *Lord*, pranked up by unbounded self-conceit, rests all his claims to superiority. Pitiful coxcomb!—Shallowest of fools!—But I will abide *my* time.

“I walked up and down the room, chuckling;—I said to myself, in language of the most fearful irony, ‘I will not hurt him.—Oh! no; I will not injure him;—I love him too well for that. I will take him to my bosom; and I will fondle him.—My soul’s idol,—my beloved friend; thinkest thou that *I* will injure thee? Oh! no;—I will not harm thee; I will not curse thee; I will not triumph over thee. Oh! no; I will do none of these things; I will only—” and then my thoughts

distended themselves into vagueness ; and all was confused, interminable, and indistinct, without ‘a local habitation ;’—yet most horrible, because most undefined.

“ Then I began to magnify the offence,—to set it all out before me,—to drag together the events of a whole life, and to connect them all with that one insult. He who could utter those monstrous words, must have been inventing the sarcasm all his days. It was not the thing of a moment ; a spontaneous and sudden effusion ;—it must have been *designed, brooded over*, and slowly perfected. The inventor of such an atrocious insult must have served a lengthened apprenticeship to some sneering devil,—some monster of the dagger-speaking art. The poison, which he then poured forth, must have been fermenting for years past ; and Leicester must have been watching over it, and stirring it, with all the patience and expectation of an alchymist, looking for the recompence of his labours. It could not be otherwise than this. — The words which he had lately uttered contained the very quintessence of the most refined hatred ;—they were not the growth of a new-born passion ; but of one matured, long-cherished, and perfected by hoary time. They were the language of one acquainted with all the turns and windings of hate,—deeply read in all the intricacies of villany,—

practised in the art of inflicting torture,—a heart-hardened and obdurate offender. The whole course of his existence must have been one hideous and mighty lie ; his soul must have been blotched and whitened with the leprosy of never-ending deceit ; his heart ulcerous with hate ; his countenance rigid from habitual falsehood ; his voice schooled in all the modulations of hypocrisy, and obeying the suggestions of his inventive master-mind ;—with glozing words ever at command, and mellifluous cadences and adulterate smiles, breathing love, gratitude, and devotion, he had won me ; he had cheated me ; he had imposed upon me. I saw all his machinations :—from the very first hour of our companionship, he had been playing a specious part ; it was a deeply-laid plot, and he had duped me. With a show of affection he had deluded me, and my heart clove to him ; and I had loved him,—loved him, as the Grecian youth, who wedded a fair maiden ; and, behold, it was a *lamia*,—a serpent !—It was a scheme planned for my undoing ; he had fooled me to the top of my bent ; he had wound me up like the chords of an instrument, only to see them crack ; he had played with my feelings and kindled my affections, and smiled upon me, until the strings of my heart twined themselves around him, and then he snapped them rudely asunder.—It had all been contrived

and plotted; and, in sooth, it was a goodly contrivance, most philosophically devised. What knowledge of the human mind,—what acquaintance with the workings of the affections! I had no common enemy to grapple with;—I had matched myself against a man fertile in resources, a most masterly hypocrite, an able and judicious mechanic; one who could lead the heart captive, and then torture the prisoner,—one who knew that injury and insult crush their victim with a tenfold violence, when they sit upon the grave of a bygone friendship, and remind him of that which has been. Subtle and delicate metaphysician!—To make my love put the crown upon my desolation,—to make my woes greater by contrast.—He had done it; he had succeeded to the utmost; his execution was equal to his design; and I acknowledged the victory he had gained, in the touching language of the afflicted David:—‘For it is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have borne it; neither was it mine adversary that did magnify himself against me; for then, peradventure, I would have hid myself from him; but it was even my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend. We took sweet counsel together, and walked in the house of God as friends.’*

* Psalm lv.—Translation in the Vulgate.

—Then I weighed the injury I had received, and it was exceeding heavy. I had been assaulted in all the most vulnerable points;—it was as though all the tenderest and most sensitive nerves of my body had been brought to one common centre, and then snipped by a sudden divulsion. All that I held most sacred.—all that I desired to keep most inviolate,—all that I most cherished, and most worshipped had been attacked, and prostrated, and trampled upon. The Roman eagle, that great symbol of desolation, had been planted in my soul, and I bowed to it; and there was darkness over all the land, and I was sore troubled: and all the seven plagues of Egypt had been let loose upon my afflicted mind.—He, whom I thought my friend, had abused me, and I was now friendless: she whom I loved had listened to my dishonour, and now she was no mate for me:—many strangers and acquaintance had heard the sentence of my disgrace, and from mouth to mouth the foul words would be bandied and tossed about, like the fires in the torch-races of old, until my name would be the watch-word of ignominy, and I should become a land-mark on the cliffs of dishonour,—a thing for derision to scoff at, and for all mankind to condemn. Society was no longer for me:—I was branded as an impostor,—as a wretch who had set up false pretensions, who, in the height of his truth-

despising vanity, had 'given himself out' to the world as the affianced husband of Geraldine Leicester. And all this at one blow,—this mighty and varied suffering concentrated at one point. A single sentence was enough to convince me that I was a miserable and friendless dupe,—a widowed bridegroom, and a disgraced man. I was unfit to herd with men; the congregation of humanity had discarded me.

“ But Geraldine—my poor, and still cherished Geraldine—she had not sinned against me, nor cast me off, nor ever spoken an unkind word to me. She wept when she heard me reviled; she sorrowed when they spoke evil things of me; but yet Geraldine was not for me. No: she was Leicester's sister; and nature drew back and revolted at the contemplation of an union between us. She had been a witness of my disgrace; she had listened to the venomous words which had dropped from her brother's tongue; and though they fell upon her heart like a molten metal, scorching it, and distilling pain through every vein and artery, yet she heard them; and her eyes were opened; and no longer could she look upon me as one whose reputation was unsullied, whose honour not a voice had assailed. But more than this; there was no hope for us, for Leicester opposed our union; and Geraldine loved her brother.

“ Then I bethought myself how I might best retaliate : how I might requite evil with evil ; and injure even as I had been injured. I began to marshal my ideas into a more specific form ; but there was great difficulty in the task. To devise any plan of revenge, adequate to the profoundness of my malice, I felt to be next to an impossibility. None were sufficiently comprehensive—none commensurate with my mighty detestation. One design after another presented itself, but each one was more paltry than the last. To kill him by slow degrees—to insinuate into the veins of his body some subtle and slowly working poison, till life became an agony and a disease, and death a long-wished-for repose,—to entice him to the gaming-table and to ruin him,—to cast him into the slough of poverty, and prostrate him in the dust of humiliation. How pitiful such simple devices ! But at length my intellect expanded, and a more noble contrivance suggested itself. ‘ No ;’ I said, ‘ let fools and triflers avenge themselves upon the bodies of their enemies. Let a scanty measure of physical suffering suffice the desires of their narrow appetites. Let them go away contented, when they have seen the eyelids of their foe fixed in death, and heard the death-rattle in the throat ; and then let them say that they are satisfied. I am no such half-and-half performer ;

boys and mountebanks avenge themselves thus. But I will meddle not with the outward man; for death will deprive me of my victim. No; let the muscles of his frame be condensed; let his flesh grow solid upon his bones; let his pulse beat equably; and his cheek glow with the ruddy tint of health. It skills not; for I would not have him die. All that I desire is this—to damn his soul everlastingly—to make him an abomination in the sight of God, and a loathing to all good men—to vitiate his mind utterly, to smite it with the leprosy of guilt—to send him wandering up and down the world, an unclean and eschewed deformity—to make his soul a filthy lazar-house, the receptacle of all evil things; the very sewer of all that is most debasing. *This* would I wish to see him; this—and when he is grown old in crime—when in the dark catalogue of his offences every suggestion of Satan is numbered—when he is quite fallen; quite undone; so deep in vice that he can sink no further; then, then would I come upon him. Then I would point to myself and exclaim—‘I am he who has brought you to this;’ and then I would jeer him, and make a mock of him, and curse him; and when the first ray of repentance flashed upon his benighted soul, then, but not until then, would I *slay him*; for I would have him go down to the pit in all the rampant grossness of his enor-

mities; and there should be no help for him, because he died in the very flower of his sinfulness'——

“ But I checked myself, and my heart sickened; for I thought to myself ‘ How am I to do this? The design is worthy of me, but execution falters; and I know not how I am to accomplish this.’ Then I racked my brain, but to no purpose: and I cried aloud, ‘ Time—time—I will abide my time’—— and I lived but to revenge——

“ I went abroad—I quitted England, for it was no place for me to dwell in. This little island was too small to contain Leicester and myself in its compass. France, Italy, and Switzerland, I traversed with unwearying rapidity; but I saw nothing; I took no note of the countries through which I passed, for one engrossing and burning thought, in a thousand different guises, monopolized my brain; and I cherished it; and I closed my eyes to all other considerations. One solitary principle regulated the whole conduct of my life. One hope, one fear, one desire, stirred within my breast, and actuated me. I saw nothing but the letters which syllabled the word ‘ Revenge,’ and which now in flaming characters, like the handwriting on Belshazzar’s walls, were visible every hour of the day. But the consummation of my desires was far off.

“I settled down at length in Rome. I have said that my hatred for Leicester was of that silent, smiling nature, which characterizes the deepest passion; and because it was not noisy and tumultuous, it was destitute of that hasty impetuosity, which seeks an immediate retribution, and aims at the promptitude, rather than the efficacy and entireness of its revenge. But I was in no hurry to act. I could bear the protracted agony of delay; because I deemed that time would mature my schemes, and render the vengeance-stroke more crushing. My time had not yet come; my victim was not ready for the knife. ‘I will come upon him,’ I said, ‘when he least expects me; I will be with him when I shall be most unwelcome. He shall feel my hand upon his shoulder in the hour of triumphant joy. When he is in the ‘high places’ he shall see me. When the serenity of his thoughts is unbroken; when sunshine is over his soul; and the cup of beatitude at his lips; I will throw a stone into the calm waters of his peace; I will cast a shadow over the brightness of his joy; I will spill the wine of his bliss upon the ground. And I will ‘turn the night of his pleasure into fear;’ and I will smite him, and he shall fly from me.’

“But in Italy I mixed with my fellows. I was singularly constant in my resolution to suffer no

latent feelings of tenderness, no sparks of my better nature, no qualms of an upbraiding conscience, to rush upon me unawares, and to throw down the noble structure of my magnificent and boundless malice. I fenced my heart round about with callousness; I rendered it impervious to the inroads of pity; in my tabernacle there was no mercy-seat: none, I mean, for him who had injured me. I placed my hatred, as it were, in the inner ark of the temple, and I set a legion of fiends to guard it, each one with a flaming sword; but for the rest I was as other men are. In the whole world there was not one living creature, beyond Leicester, whom I would not have blessed in the fulness of my heart. I was pious, gentle, and devout, I was beloved by all who knew me, though I rarely made any permanent acquaintance, because I was ever wandering from place to place: and did not desire to be recognized by those whom I had once consorted with. I was the unseen benefactor of many, and whithersoever I went, happiness tracked my footsteps. I was singularly austere in my morality; I abstained from all vicious indulgences; I curbed the impetuosity of my passions; and I might have been, nay, I was regarded, as a good and a wise man. Yet in all this I was but practising, what the French philosophers call '*l'art de chicaner avec Dieu.*'

“ I had an agent in London, whose business it was to watch the proceedings of mine enemy, and to make me acquainted with all that passed. The first intelligence of any moment which I received, was the marriage of Geraldine Leicester. This had no very great effect upon me ; I only prayed that she might be happy with her husband ; and I blessed her somewhat in the language, wherewith Aspatia, in the play, blessed him who had forsaken her. Then there was a long interval, during which time no communications were addressed to me ; and when at length a letter did arrive, I learnt that Lord Leicester had been wedded some months, to one of the Ladies * * *. Heavens ! what a startling communication. Why had I not known this before ? I cursed my unlucky fortune : and I cursed the agent whom I had employed. But the letter was sufficiently explanatory. He, to whose vigilance I had trusted for my information had been attacked by an alarming malady, which threatened death to himself, and all the members of his house. This man was an accomplished rogue, but strikingly honest in his villany, if I may be allowed such a bold paradox. He never scrupled to undertake the most degrading and rascally business ; nothing was too vile for him ; no filth could soil his hand ; but he would never betray his employer. When he had taken upon himself to prosecute

any sort of business, no considerations could deter him from accomplishing it. His services were pledged, and nothing but positive inability could prevent him from exerting his energies to the utmost possible extent. He was a faithful servant in villany ; and was honest in the midst of dishonesty. But this was an unforeseen occurrence ; yet, not on that account, the less disastrous ; and I was overwhelmed with the magnitude of my misfortune. ‘ Married ! ’ I exclaimed, ‘ *married!* Oh ! that I had but known that mine enemy was *about to be* married ; for I might have circulated a damning rumour ; I might have given the fashion of truth to a lie of my own creating. I might have made him an opprobrium, and a disgrace ; and framed my devices so craftily, that each one might have worn a semblance of reality, though the master-craftsman himself should be invisible. But my time is not far off ; the avalanche will fall soon ; and it will only be more crushing, because its descent has been for awhile retarded.’ And thus I communed with myself ; thus I nursed the infancy of my vengeance.

“ But I had not to tarry long. Ere many more months had elapsed, I was apprized of some fresh circumstances which suggested a new train of reflections, and the consummation of my wishes I distinctly beheld, though I had to look through a

vista of many years. The circumstances to which I allude were no other than the birth of an heir to the title and estates of Lord Leicester; and the death of Lady Leicester (*not* the Dowager), which followed but a few weeks behind her confinement; she having imprudently exposed herself too recently after parturition.

“I no sooner became acquainted with these events than a light of exceeding splendour burst in upon my brain; and I rejoiced. Leicester was a widower and a father. Destiny had favoured me in this: there was a glorious prospect before me; I beheld, at last, the consummation of my hopes; and I chuckled, as I said to myself, *I will revenge myself upon the father, by debauching his only child*. What think you, Jerningham, of this? a notable project was it not?—a very well-imagined conceit? worthy of an exalted situation in the ‘Palace of Dainty Devices.’

“My revenge now began to assume a more defined and palpable appearance. Up to this point my meditations had been akin to those which the bereaved *Lear* has so forcibly given utterance to, in the play, when he curses his unnatural daughters.

‘I will have such revenges on you both
That all the world shall—I will do such things,
*What they are yet I know not; but they shall be
The terrors of the earth.*’

—All had been confused—uncertain, and most indefinitely terrible; but now my thoughts became fixed and determined; and I saw, though it was afar off, the haven of my long-voyaging revenge. ‘Yes;’ I exclaimed,—‘*Ευρηκα*—I have found it: I have made an unequalled discovery. Not Magellan; nor Vasco de Gama; nor Columbus could have felt more elate than I feel. Yes; the star of Bethlehem has arisen; and it will guide me to the consummation of my revenge. How clearly do I see it all; with what strange powers of vision do my eyes pierce the mists of futurity. The Fates are at work upon my side; they have stricken mine enemy already; his bride of a year is dead; and affliction has come upon him. Mark this! Universal nature assists me in the prosecution of my vengeance. I have but to wish, and it is done. Invisible agents minister to me. The world of spirits are my servants. Let me reflect: Leicester is alone:—a widower with one child;—‘one little ewe lamb,’ who will live in his bosom and be his all: and I will wean this lamb from him; and I will turn the heart of his child against him; and there shall be contention between father and son; and Leicester shall live to feel the serpent-tooth of ingratitude; and he shall curse the hour of his birth. Yes; I have designed it all; I will vitiate the soul of this child; I will entice

him from the paths of virtue; I will set syrens in his way; and I will bind him with a spell; and he shall listen to me. Ay; it will be a pleasant task,—it will kill me to do it, but it shall be done. I will pollute the boyhood of mine enemy's child; I will debauch him utterly; I will turn him aside from that which is right; and I will teach him to curse his father. In the morning of his life I will sit down by him; and I will whisper strange things into his ear; and I will trick out vice in its daintiest apparel, to dance before him, and to allure him. And, then, I will undermine his faith; he shall learn to scoff at religion; he shall become an atheist and a blasphemer, and he shall turn away from God altogether; and he shall own no laws but those of his own appetites;—and, verily, I will not leave him till the purity of his young soul shall be converted into hoar leprosy; and he shall rebel against his father and his God. In sooth, it was an evil day with Leicester when he aroused my vengeance; for he shall look upon his beloved son, tainted, debased, and spotted; he shall hear the oath and the blasphemy, and start because it is his child's voice; he shall feel the dagger in his heart, and know that his boy planted it there. I have plotted it all, and it shall be done. That infant—that little child, which, methinks, I see in its cradle, with

the halo of innocence around its head ;— that smiling cherub, over which, in my mind's eye, I can see Lord Leicester fondly bending with an inarticulate blessing upon his lips, whilst his heart silently praying, calls on Providence to stretch out its wings that they may be a safe-guard to his tender babe ;—that slumbering boy, I say, shall grow up to curse his father ; he shall drain the cup of sin to the dregs ; his heart shall be converted into stone ; he shall become a monster of ingratitude ; and his soul shall be all corruption ; and when the grey hairs of his sire shall be brought in sorrow, nigh unto the grave, then I will come forward from my hiding-place ; and I will whisper into the ears of mine enemy. ‘ *Now*, I have cancelled the debt. Look, you ; hast thou forgotten me ? ‘ Ha, ha, ha ! It is I who have corrupted your son. It is I who have made him what he is. It is I who have turned him against you. Hark you,— and my name, I will whisper it :—My name is Godfray Moreton. Ha, ha, ha ! Those were rare words which I heard in the garden-house, at ——. And then I will watch him as he *dies*.

“ Jerningham, reach me that book. It is a copy of Feltham's *Resolves* ; and I have marked a passage, which I would read to you, because it is peculiarly illustrative of my history. ‘ As the deepest hate,’ writes old Owen, ‘ is that which springs from the most violent love ; so, the greatest

discourtesies oft arise from the largest favours. Benefits to good natures can never be so great, as to make thanks blush in their tendering ; but when they be weighty, and light on ill ones, they then make their return in ingratitude. Extraordinary favours make the giver hated by the receiver, that should love him. Experience has proved that Tacitus wrote truth : *Beneficia usque adeò læta sunt, dum videntur posse exolvi, ubi multum anteverere, pro gratiâ, odium redditur*. Benefits are so long grateful as we think we can repay them ; but when they challenge more, our thanks convert to hate.’—Is not this passage a key to unlock the mystery of Leicester’s unnatural behaviour?—a clue to unravel all that was perplexed in his conduct ? And yet ’tis a strange solution of a problem that oft has puzzled me : I had rescued Lord Leicester from death ; and, the benefit was so great, that he hated me for it !

“ I have told you, I think, already, that *my* actions are not to be measured by the common standard of humanity. I should marvel if you were to say that experience furnished you with a single instance of behaviour, which can be ranked as a parallel to mine. In all, except the proportions of my frame, I was a giant,—not an ordinary man. You already know how I *loved*,—and, methinks, by this time, how I *hated*,—you will soon understand how I *revenged*, when I tell you that *for fifteen*

years, silent, inactive, and in a strange country, far away from the scene of my wrongs, and the home of my doomed enemy, I kept alive the fires of my revenge, and the flame upon my altar dwindled not; neither was it once flickering or dim. Night after night, as the sun went down into the ocean, I said to myself, ‘It is well! I am one day nearer the consummation.’ And when I arose in the morning from my haunted slumbers, and looked upon the face of Nature, I gloried, and exclaimed vauntingly, ‘The earth and the heavens change; the rapid and revolving seasons succeed one another in their courses, and Nature wears an altered aspect. The sun itself shines not always; darkness comes on, and it is obscured. But *I* change not with the seasons; I alone am constant and invariable. Days, months, years depart into the grave of the past; but witness no diminution of my hatred. Sleep steals upon me, and I am full of malice; it leaves me, and I am still the same.’

“I had a little miniature of Leicester. It was an exact counterfeit of his features, painted by a skilful hand, when the star of our friendship was on the ascendant. I wore it suspended around my neck; and looked at it, night and morning, to curse the original of the picture. Oftentimes, hour after hour, have I sat gazing intently upon the

lineaments of that portraiture,—wrapt, silent, and motionless; my head supported by my clenched hands, whilst, ever and anon, a tear—large, scalding, and solitary—rolled down each arid cheek, and fell upon the glazed miniature. I sat there like Count Ezzelin, in the picture,* contemplating the corpse of his mistress, whom he had slain with his own hand, though once he had loved her so devotedly. Jerningham, I still have the miniature. There; look at it; scrutinize it. 'Tis a fair face, is it not?

“I will not tell you the various incidents which occurred to me during my sojourn abroad. I will not destroy, by the interpolation of any episodes, the sublime unity of my story. I will not dwell upon my travels, and my studies, nor touch upon aught foreign to my revenge. Let it suffice, that I visited many countries,—that I ransacked the storehouses of a hundred libraries,—that I visited every town in Southern Europe, where aught worthy of observation was to be seen,—that I mixed with men of all nations and classes. But one immediate object was uppermost in all that I did,—to study the

* By Fuseli in Soane's Museum. Lavater describes it thus: “It is a knight who has just assassinated his mistress. Fettered by remorse of conscience, accused by the presence of his victim, he deplores his madness without repenting; *he detests it, yet still applauds himself for it.*”

human character,—to enhance my power over men, by the possession of a clue to their conduct,—to be able to guide and govern, by unravelling the intricacies of men's minds. In all that I did, I was *practising*; I was perfecting myself in my craft. I was training myself, that I might be prepared, when the strife of the gladiator should commence, and the season of my action be at hand. After fifteen years' incessant and unwearying study, I stepped from my obscurity, upon the arena,—a raw veteran,—an experienced tyro; complete in all but the art of schooling my countenance into obedience; and this, though an important point of my rare education in villany, had baffled my endeavours, and mocked me; for nothing could tutor it into rigidity,—nothing brace up its muscles until they moved not.

“When young Henry Leicester was entering upon his thirteenth year, I thought that it was time to set about my handy work; so I began to make preparation for a speedy return to England. Whilst busied upon the necessary arrangements, I received a letter from my London agent, informing me of the unlooked-for failure of a great mercantile speculation, in which more than two-thirds of Lord Leicester's property had been embarked: the same advices acquainted me with the demise of the Dowager Lady Leicester, whose dissolution

had, for some time past, been anticipated by her anxious family. My informant proceeded to state, that loss of property, so far from humbling, had considerably augmented Leicester's pride: for that since his bubbles had burst, he had fenced himself in with a wall of most impenetrable reserve; communing with none of his neighbours, and cleaving only to his son. 'Ha!' I exclaimed, as I perused the letter, 'the fates labour for me still.'

"Upon my first leaving Great Britain, I had sold all my landed estates, which, in ——shire, were not inconsiderable. In addition to this, I had converted all the disposable property, which had been bequeathed to me, under the will of my father, into hard, tangible cash. It was my object to avoid all negotiation with the bankers and merchants of the British metropolis; to throw off every clog upon my movements, every stumbling-block in the way of my independence. I desired that all my doings should be secret, and that in England I should cease to be remembered. I therefore opened an account with one of the principal bankers in Paris, in the name of an eminent French lawyer, in whose integrity I had every reason to confide, and with whom I was intimately acquainted. I hated the details of business, and in my anxiety to absolve myself of that *onus*, I often exposed myself to the dishonesty of my

agents, though, in justice to humanity, I must add, that I suffered but rarely by my credulity, and had every reason to rejoice at my good fortune. In England, therefore, I was soon forgotten; for I had no relative in the world nearer than a second cousin, with whom I had never communicated, and who never concerned himself about my movements, as long as he believed me to be alive. I should have resorted to the notable expedient of circulating a report of my death, if I had not been possessed of property, the disposal of which would have led to an investigation; for the demise of an unconnected man, possessed of some fifty thousand pounds, is an event little likely to be passed over in total silence by a cupidinous world. There would have been claimants, of course, to my estates, and then my very object would have been defeated, for it was my desire to immerse into oblivion, and a report of my death would have forbidden this. So I contented myself with abandoning my patronymic, and substituting a counterfeit name, for the better accomplishment of those terrible schemes which for so many years had been submitted to a tedious process of incubation, and which now, at length, were on the eve of bursting the shell which so long had bound them, and of assuming, after a long period of inertness, all the functions of an active vitality.

“ I stood upon English ground, and I lifted up my voice exultingly. ‘ Rejoice, all evil spirits,’ I exclaimed, ‘ for I have begun my work ; the consummation of my vengeance is at hand. I have taken the first step upon my journey. Destiny favours me ; I shall triumph.’

“ I set out for —— Castle. ‘ I will see him,’ I said, ‘ and he shall not know me ; I will stand at his elbow ; I will address him ; I will call him by name, but he shall deem me a stranger. I would fain see the work of time upon that noble structure of humanity.’

“ I arrayed myself in a garb of mendicity. In the disguise of a broken soldier, I entered Lord Leicester’s park. For several hours, unobserved, I haunted the neighbourhood of his house. At length I was rewarded for my perseverance ; he came forth, accompanied by his child. Of a certainty I might have passed him in the public streets unrecognized, he was so altered ; *quantum mutatus* ; what an abject ruin of the noble creature, that erst he was. He came forth from his house, and I gazed at him for some minutes in silence. I doubted whether I beheld Lord Leicester ; I had not seen him for fifteen years ; but when I had parted from him, with that dreadful unuttered curse gnawing at my heart, Jerningham, he was beautiful as the Apollo of the Vatican, — his

form, his features, his complexion, were full of loveliness and grace. Youth, health, and a joyous heart united to enhance his adornments; there was a jocund clearness in his voice, an active elasticity in his step; an expression of careless animation in his countenance, which rarely deserted him; but now he bore every appearance of a diseased and stricken old man. His face was pale and attenuated, his eyes dull and filmy, he was very thin, and the dignified erectness of his figure had yielded to a downward bend, which rendered him almost a hunch-back. It was evidently painful for him to exert himself; he leaned upon the shoulder of his son, and walked very slowly. There was nothing of the young Lord Leicester in the infirm old nobleman before me. I only knew that I was in the presence of mine enemy, because the boy who attended him showed all the anxiety of a son, and because I recognized, at once, in that boy, the only child of Lord Leicester. There was no mistaking *him* for a minute. I knew him, though I had never seen him; he was the son of mine enemy; he was *my victim*! I could not doubt it, for he was the very image of what the father was, at his years. ‘Ha!’ I said, ‘this man is the object—this boy is the instrument—of my revenge.’

“I looked at them; one glance was sufficient to

tell me that they doated on each other. ‘ This is well,’ I said, ‘ ye little dream that your love is to be the tool of my vengeance.’

“ I accosted them ; I asked for alms. Lord Leicester raised his eyes from the ground, and said in a querulous tone, ‘ Friend, I do not like this intrusion ; go to the house and my servants will relieve you.’ But the boy looked beseechingly at his father, and said, ‘ Do not trust to them, papa ; the man appears to be distressed, and he says that he wants money. May I give him this—on my *own* account, papa ; remember you are not to pay me again, if you do, it will be no gift of mine,’ and he took half a sovereign from his purse, ‘ the man says he has served his country ; I don’t want this money I am sure—here, my friend, take it’—and the boy extended the glittering coin.

“ I saw nothing—neither the hand nor the gold, for my eyes were too full of tears. I was not so heart-hardened, but that I could weep upon such an occasion as this. ‘ Merciful God !’ I inwardly exclaimed, ‘ and is this boy to be my victim ?’

“ I wept—I shed tears of pity ; but I did not turn aside from my purpose.

“ ‘ Are you ill, my poor man ?’ said the boy, and despite the sordidness of my apparel, he placed his hand soothingly upon my shoulder.

“ I trembled as the child touched me ; yes, Jerningham, I trembled all over. There was something in the kindness of the boy which awed me ; I was unnerved. A voice seemed to whisper in my ear, ‘ And do you not relent now ? ’

“ I *did* relent ; but my purpose was unshaken. I hated the task, but I was resolute to accomplish it.

“ ‘ Are you ill, my poorman ? ’ asked the boy. ‘ Is there any thing we can do to relieve you ? ’

“ *Relieve me!*—I looked at my victim—why, did not the sight kill me?

“ I found words at length to articulate ; I said that I was not ill, but that I was overcome by the young gentleman’s kindness ; there was truth in this story and it gained a ready credence. Even Lord Leicester was moved. I had been so absorbed in the contemplation of the son, that I had not watched the gestures of the father. Now, I turned mine eyes upon my enemy. Oh ! how he must have suffered since we parted ; I asked myself, ‘ Has my conduct added one drop to the waters of his affliction ? ’ and once, though but for a single moment, I thought ‘ He has suffered enough.’

“ *Enough.* Oh ! what had been his sufferings in comparison with the enormity of mine?—a span of time with eternity—a speck of earth with infinity

—a rain-drop with the boundless ocean. He knew not what it was to suffer until I taught him the way.

“ Even Lord Leicester was moved. The excitement I had betrayed was so manifestly genuine, that he no longer regarded me as an imposter. He tore a slip of paper from a small note book, and having written on it a few words in pencil, he gave it to me, saying at the same time, ‘ Give this to one of the servants, my friend, and they will give you wherewithal to refresh yourself. Food and rest will restore you; your way lies along that path,’ and Lord Leicester walked on, still leaning upon the shoulder of his son.

“ I recovered my self-possession before I entered the servant’s hall. I said to myself, as I traversed the court-yard, ‘ This slip of paper may render me good service. I will enact my part amongst his lordship’s menials more adroitly than in the presence of mine enemy. I will be again the broken-down soldier, and the character may help me; but I must be firm. It will not do to betray my emotion amongst these pampered hirelings.’ And entering the house with my passport in my hand, I gave it to one in authority, and was soon supplied with all that I wanted, including the intelligence I desired.

“ There were several men in the servants’ hall—

grooms, footmen, and stable-boys. It was not a large establishment for a nobleman, but still the domestics were numerous, and appeared to have but little to do. I soon attracted the notice of one or two of them, and having invented a few plausible fictions about campaigns, sieges, and 'hearth-breadth 'scapes,' I was voted 'a deuced fine fellow,' and the 'blue-coats' condescended to be sociable. I soon extracted from them all that I wished. Nothing could be more favourable to my vengeful designs. Lord Leicester had come to the determination of sending Master Henry to school, directly the holidays were over. His lordship, the servant said, was sore distressed about parting with his son, for he was a very affectionate and amiable boy, gave no trouble to any body, and was the very prop and solace of his father. But that father was not selfish, and he thought it good for his son to go to school.

" 'I suppose,' said I, in a careless tone, 'he be going to Eton or Harrow, or one of them big schools where most of the great gentry goes?'

" 'No,' replied the man, 'he be'nt. There is one Dr. R——, who keeps a school nigh unto * * *. He was tutor to my lord at college, I believe, and now he has set up for himself, to educate young gentlemen; he is a great schollard, I

assure you, and young master will soon learn, for he's a mighty good hand at the book.'

"I did not remain very long at —— Castle after this; I hurried into a retired place, where I stripped myself of my disguise, and threw the bundle into a ditch; my own clothes were beneath the rags; I had disfigured the appearance of my face by means of a false beard, sundry patches of black plaster, and a dirty green shade athwart one eye; I carried these trophies along with me, and the next day I was at * * *.

"I took up the county-newspaper; invisible agents seemed to work for me everywhere; I read an advertisement for an assistant-master in a school, situated at * * *. *Apply to the Rev. Dr. R——.* The paper fell from my hand—'I see now distinctly,' I exclaimed, 'the haven of my world-wandering desires.'

"I applied to Dr. R—— for the vacant situation; I soon convinced him of my intellectual capacity, but he said something about testimonials of character, which involved me in a painful perplexity. I did not know one individual in the whole country to whom I could apply, because I had assumed a fictitious name, and who could speak to the character of an impostor? But I *had* a friend, nevertheless, Jerningham; I had *money*, and what can money not do? There was

a certain attorney in the place ; I *bought* testimonials from him ; there was a banker, I placed cash in his hands, and he spoke to the respectability of my character.

— The compact was soon agreed upon, and I became an inmate at Dr. R——'s. You know, Jerningham, how I comported myself there, you know how I attached myself to young Leicester—how I courted—how I loved the boy. Yes, you may shudder to hear the name of love profaned by such a monster as I am, but I *did* love him, as the butcher loves the lamb—as the vulture loves the small bird—

As the sea-dog doats
Upon the small sweet fry that round him floats.

I loved him, for he was my victim—my food ; he was the wine of my soul. I was thirsty—I thirsted for vengeance, and when I laid my hand upon the shoulder of the boy, I said to myself—‘ I may drink now, the wine-cup of revenge is in my hand.’

— But this was not all, Jerningham, I loved the boy as my victim—I loved him because he was a scourge in my hand—I loved him because he was the instrument of my vengeance, but I loved him, also, for his own sake—his youth—his innocence—his open-hearted intelligence—the thousand graces of his uncorrupted mind—I loved them all—but

my hatred for the father was deeper than my love for the son.

“ I attached myself to the boy—I told him a specious story of certain favours conferred upon me by his family—I told him how his mother’s benevolence had rescued me from penury and starvation—it was a wily and plausible fabrication. It told of certain events *not to be spoken of in the presence of Lord Leicester*. I connected my own history, in such a manner, with certain painful occurrences, which I hinted at, but which I would not explain, that the boy became impressed with the necessity of never mentioning my name to his father. ‘ It is better,’ I said, ‘ that he should not hear of me: my name would only awaken associations in your father’s mind which would be painful to him, and which he had better be spared. Will you promise me, my dear boy, not to mention the name of Delaval in the presence of Lord Leicester? For your father’s sake, if not for mine, I am sure, that you will abstain from alluding to any circumstances which may conduce to his inquietude. You had better neither mention my name, nor touch upon anything which may lead to an inquiry.’

“ In this manner I bound him over to secrecy, ‘ I am safe now,’ I exclaimed, and I set about my evil work.

“ Jerningham, you know not what it cost me to corrupt this innocent boy ; it would not be possible for you to conceive the agony which preyed upon my soul. There was a wild fire which was always burning in my bosom, and in the cavities of my brain : strange shapes haunted my slumbers, and rose up before me in the day-light ; I felt all the complicated horrors of a man who, having sold himself to the arch-fiend, reflects upon the terrible compact, and knows that there is no hope for him. My heart was not yet turned to stone ; it was hardened against mine enemy, but it was full of kindness for all beside ; I looked upon young Leicester, and I loved him with the affection of a parent ; I felt as though I were about to destroy the soul of my own son ; how merciful it would have been to have slain him with the blush of innocence upon his cheek ! I wavered ; I had looked forward to the hour of my vengeance for fifteen long years of unswerving and unmitigated hatred—for fifteen years had I been steering towards this point, and never for one minute had I turned aside, or deviated from my course ; I lived but to consummate my revenge ; it was the very principle of my existence ; the all-engrossing subject of my thoughts ; the centre towards which every action of my love had converged, and now, at last, I had crossed the threshold of my home ;

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the golden fleece of my long-voyaging hatred was before me; it was within my grasp, but I feared to touch it; I wavered; it was too wicked to taint the innocence of this unspotted boy.

“ I wavered; my constancy was shaken; the pillar of my resolves was undermined; it tottered; but it did not fall; I recovered myself; I threw aside my weakness; I girded my loins with the armour of callousness; I cried out—‘ And shall I turn aside now? Are my mighty injuries to be unrevenged? Am I to be baffled, and bleed to death? Is the noble structure which I have been raising for fifteen years, toiling, enduring, groaning, beneath the labour, to be demolished at one blow, before I have set the statue upon the pedestal? Is all this mighty work to be the monument of a purpose unaccomplished? No; I will go on; I will debauch mine enemy’s son, and the boy shall live to curse his father, and be a *parricide*.’

“ I set about, as an initial work, to study the character of young Leicester. There was more agony in this, than in the after labour of corruption. There could not, in the society of living men, have been a more estimable creature than this boy.—His disposition was almost angelic; he was frank, sincere, benevolent, and overflowing with gratitude and love. He had courage, integrity, gentleness, a fine sense of honour, and a well-grounded

religious principle. The germs of every quality, which adorn and exalt the man were implanted in his youthful constitution. He was full of hope and promise. You would have said, had you known him as I did, ‘There is every thing in this boy which the fondest parent can desire. Happy is the father of such a child; for the career of his son will be a career of honour;—glory and happiness will illuminate his pathway, and the flowers of life will blossom beneath his feet.’ I studied his character intricately; I found that he was of a pliant disposition.—I said to myself ‘There is much to throw down; but the virtues of this boy shall be subservient to my villany. Gratitude is a fine tool to work with; I will lead him in golden fetters.—He shall love me, and his love shall be his ruin;—I will sacrifice him upon the altar of his affection, and he shall smile on me whilst I am destroying his soul.’

“Jerningham, I must trouble you again. Reach me that volume;—no, the other. It is a Sallust; and I would read you an extract from the historian’s character of Catiline. I am just such another monster as was that arch-villain. I do not exaggerate my enormities, when I apply this passage to myself: — ‘*Sed maxumè adolescentium familiaritates appetebat: eorum animi molles, et ætate fluxi, dolis haud difficulter capiebantur. Nam uti cujusque studium ex ætate flagrabat, aliis*

scorta præbere, aliis canes atque equos, mercari: postremo neque sumptui neque modestiæ suæ parcere, dum obnoxios fidosque sibi faceret.’ Yes, Jerningham, I did all this. Step by step did I undermine the structure of young Leicester’s morality. Oh! it was a subtle contrivance,—a most ingenious device, worthy of a master-craftsman. I won him to love me by innocent kindnesses.—I told him that his departed mother had been my benefactor, and that I loved her memory. The specious name of gratitude was always in my mouth; and the generous spirit of the boy was easily led captive by my protestations. He honoured me for what he thought my virtues; he loved me for what he thought my kindness. — It was of importance that he should understand fully the reason why I lavished my kindnesses upon him, in preference to all others; and this story about my gratitude was admirably adapted to the occasion. He not only understood the cause, but he appreciated it, and he honoured me for professing it. I had soon ensnared him in the net of my designs.—‘He loves me,’ I said; ‘he is grateful towards me. He esteems me virtuous and wise. I have dominion over his soul. He is mine. I can mould him to my will.’

“I have frequently heard people say, how easy it is to corrupt a young mind. They never

tried it, who said so : it is not easy, Jerningham ; believe me ; it is a task of the utmost difficulty.—Where the sexes are opposite, as in cases of seduction, the work of the contaminator is comparatively easy, because the appetites of his victim administer to him, and make clear his path. In a moment of uncontrollable passion, youth may be tempted into crime ; but to live in crime is a different thing :—the purity of the soul may survive the purity of the body ;—to have fallen does not necessarily prove that the mind is altogether corrupt. Do you remember an anecdote, which is told somewhere in Boswell's Johnson, to the effect that a gentleman having debauched a young girl, the girl said to him, 'I am much afraid that we have been acting very wrong ;' and the gentleman replied that they had, because he was unwilling to corrupt the mind as well as the body of the girl, by teaching her to recognize no difference between virtue and vice ! If the gentleman had replied otherwise, methinks he would have found it more difficult to impress her with the truth of his answer, than he did to extort her compliance in the first instance. It is easier to lead a person to sin against conviction, than to convince him that he is not sinning when he does sin. Reason is more obstinate than passion. Passion may gain the ascendancy, to the exclusion of reason ; but reason rarely admi-

nisters to passion. It is no easy task to seduce a young mind into being *vicious upon principle*.

“Jerningham, it was the crown of my ambition to pollute the soul of young Leicester, utterly. I was contented with no half-measures. It was not enough that I should entice the boy into a temporary deviation from virtue. It was not enough that he should sin for a day—for a month—for a year—that he should perpetrate some horrible offence in a moment of passion and excitement;—no, it was my desire to behold him deep in the ocean of infamy,—crusted all over from head to foot with the ineradicable leprosy of guilt;—lost in the labyrinthine mazes of tortuous sin, so wholly that no outlet of escape from its tangled intricacies would present itself,—an offender against God and man,—an atheist, a casuist, and an abomination.

“I began my work. I taught my victim to believe that I was wise, gentle, and virtuous. I taught him to place implicit confidence in the truth of all that I said. I began with the inculcation of most unexceptionable doctrines; and I soon convinced him that whatever proceeded from *my* mouth, must, of necessity, be good. Having established myself, therefore, as his *oracle*, I gradually relaxed the austerity of my ethical code, and unfolded before his eyes the scroll of a gentler morality. I told him that it was not necessary to

make this world a hell, to gain a heaven in the next. I told him that it was becoming to a man to be happy. I *quoted Scripture*.—‘Oh! be joyful in the Lord!’ ‘Rejoice ye.’ I had various texts, which did well enough to convince so flimsy a theologian as young Leicester. Besides, I could invent, Jerningham,—ay, and I *did* invent. Whenever I was puzzled for a passage of scripture to bear me out in any of my assertions, I *made one*; and it answered my purpose, for I took care not to suffer the Bible to be ever in the hands of my victim. Then I told him that the pleasures of the affections were lawful,—that friendship, and love, and charity, were the very lamps of life,—that love was the very essence of the Christian’s creed, to love God and man,—that he who did not love his brother could not love his God; and, truly, could any thing be more unexceptionable than this? Jerningham, in all that I did, I made virtue the stepping-stone to vice. This is the very soul of hypocrisy—‘to seem a saint when most you play the devil,’—to lead on your victim gently,—to entice him into the avenues of guilt whilst he imagines that he is treading the paths of morality. And how narrow is the bridge that passes from light to darkness; how intimately does virtue hover upon the confines of vice,—one step this way or that, and man is an angel or a demon.

“I spake of friendship and of love. I spake of the love of women—modestly, at first; of the social compact; of marriage, and of the pleasures attending upon the duties of a domestic life. How easy was my progress thence to the wildest stories of illicit affection; how simple was the transit from lawful to unlawful love. I proceeded in my work guardedly. I did nothing which might, in any wise, betray the real tenour of my designs. All was subdued, quiet, unapparent. Mole-like, I laboured under ground. I did not say much. A few touches thrown in here and there by the hand of a skilful artist will do more towards the effect of a picture than a multitudinous repetition of strokes by one, who is a novice at the work. Thus, with me, a few casual words—a few random hints, apparently unstudied, and suggested by the affairs of the moment, but thrown in at the proper season, were enough to effect my purpose. A spark will set fire to the fuel,—a word will excite a train of reflection in the mind of him who hears it. I need not tell you all the hypocritical arts which I employed to inflame the imagination of my doomed but unsuspecting victim. I watched the silent progress of my work with a curious and gloating eye. I saw the effect of my labours. I saw that the purity of young Leicester’s soul was tainted,—that its whiteness was sullied; *he* knew it, but he did not know that every spot was of my

placing. He felt that he was an altered being, and he studied to conceal the fact from me,—from me, who had corrupted him. Was not this a master-piece of ingenuity,—was not this a glittering gem in the crown of my vengeful subtlety? Yes; I had corrupted the boy, and yet he feared lest I should know of his corruptness. But, at last, he unconsciously betrayed himself; he let fall some remarks, in conversation, which I seized upon with avidity, and reproached him; but my very reproaches served to aggravate the mischief which I was reprehending. I dilated upon the heinousness of sensual gratification in language which went further to recommend it, than if I had pronounced its eulogium. By telling him what to avoid, I acquainted him with a thousand things ‘undreamt of in his philosophy,’—by exhorting him to eschew all the intricacies of vice, I taught him what those intricacies were. I opened the eyes of the boy. Under the specious pretext of moral advice, I stripped him of that blissful ignorance, which is the best safe-guard of virtue. I taught him to know vice: I told him how alluring it is: I told him how difficult it is to resist its snares and its enticements: I spoke of the necessity of girding himself with the armour of resolute defiance: I said that youth is the season, at which pleasure is most potent to entice. Oh! it was a dainty de-

vice. Verbally I said to the boy, 'Renounce the flesh; for there is death in the syren smile of sensuality;' but in effect my advice was this,—
'Pleasure is sweet. Betake yourself to its embraces; encourage the *suave scelus*.'

"I painted in glowing colours the wickedness and debauchery of the world. I went into all the details of profligacy; I described, with minute fidelity of portraiture, the polluted haunts of Babylonish London, that great sink of iniquity, where guilt of every description vegetates—a stupendous growth. I left nothing whatever untold; but every sentence was interlarded with pious ejaculations of abhorrence. I grieved over the fallen state of the people. What benevolence there was in all I said; how exalted were the sentiments I uttered! My work advanced rapidly, Jerningham. Innocence rarely survives the downfall of ignorance very long. To know vice is half way to yield to it. I succeeded; I triumphed; I knew that impure thoughts had gained an entrance into the boy's breast. I did all that I could to pamper them; I poured oil upon the flame; I enhanced the ardour of his appetites; I led him to the brink of sin, and I smiled to see him fall into the abyss.

"I employed the agency of books,—impure, demoralizing books. There are many such; I spoke of their existence; I bade young Leicester to be-

ware of them ; I told him that I was almost afraid that certain immoral works had found their way into the school. I mentioned the names of one or two boys, who, as I thought, were in possession of these abominations. This was precisely the same in effect as saying, 'Go you, and borrow them.' Then I purchased some of these works myself, and having invented a specious story of the manner, in which they had become my property I put them into Leicester's hand, saying, 'Take them, my boy, and destroy them. Bury them ten fathoms deep, or burn them in a remorseless fire. I am sure that you will rejoice in the task of sweeping away such filth from the earth,' and then, with sundry devout exclamations, I surrendered these books to my pupil, knowing that he would read every line of them.

"Then again I exerted all my energies to undermine the faith of my victim. I had already taught him to believe that the path of sin is easy and flower-strewn. I knew that he had the inclination to try it, and that he was only restrained from indulging himself, by certain obscure religious scruples, which I thought it would be easy to eradicate. He had all the motives to sin, but he had not yet cast off the fears, which, in some measure, withheld him. 'I have no guarantee,' said I, 'that he will persevere in his course of

guilt. It is said that a strong religious principle is the only sponsor for morality. The converse of this is also the case. The only sponsor for immorality is the absence of all religious principle. Before many moons shall have waned, this boy shall deny his God.'

"I adopted the same course, in this second stage of my work of pollution, as had proved so successful in the first instance. I declaimed against atheists and blasphemers. I told the boy that the word of God had been scouted, and held in derision; I told him that there were men in the world, learned, profound, and estimable in all the relations of life, who nevertheless had abjured christianity, and who thought it no disgrace to be counted for infidels by their fellow-men. I mentioned a few of the most plausible objections which had been urged against revealed religion; I mentioned them of course to refute them; but still they did not fail of their mark. Then I put into his hands certain works of a dubious and covert nature; I told him that he would find in their pages substantial proofs of the truth of Revelation. I gave him all the feeblest refutations of Atheism, which ever injured the cause they were written to uphold. Then I put into his hands Bishop Berkeley's *Alciphron* — you know the nature of that work; the bishop with singular honesty has brought

forward the most potent arguments which the free-thinkers have adduced against religion. He has brought forwards these objections to disprove them; and he does it; but the superficial reader may rise from a perusal of this book, doubting whether the bishop, after all, has not over-reached himself by the method of his argumentation. Young Leicester's was an inquiring mind; he was by nature not averse from application; he expressed a desire to be further informed, and asked if he might not be suffered to peruse some antagonist infidel work. I answered peremptorily in the negative. My refusal only aggravated his desire, and he soon repeated the request. I hesitated for some time, and at last with every appearance of reluctance, I gave him the *Age of Reason*, and — you remember, Jerningham, what a turmoil was excited by this book.

“However, though distressed and agitated by this unfortunate *contre-temps*, I did not relax my exertions; I did not turn aside for one moment. I put other infidel works into the hands of my youthful victim—Volney, Spinoza, Diderot—they did their work; yes, Jerningham, they did. I listened to young Leicester's protestations; he did not speak openly out, but still I heard enough to convince me. ‘Well,’ I said, ‘my work progresses; I have prepared the soil, and the seeds shall be soon

planted. His mind is in an abject condition; I have confounded virtue and vice; I have polluted the stream of his morality, and I have led his reason into the labyrinth of error. He has every temptation, and no restraint; he will soon be the worst of sinners; he will sin designedly — upon principle.'

"Having gone thus far I relaxed my energies. I had launched the bark of corruption, and I left it to the stream of circumstance. I said to myself, 'He wants nothing now but the opportunity to sin, and he will sin. I have thrown down every barrier of restraint, and now he may wander at large in the wilderness of profligate error. I have shaped the course of the boy, it is his part to follow it now. I see it all; his doom is fixed—fixed as the fiat of Omnipotence.'

"But I did not wholly desist from my labours—I watched the boy narrowly as heretofore; and, in sooth, it was a pleasant thing to mark what an alteration I had wrought upon his plastic mind. An apt pupil, indeed, was young Leicester. By the time that he was fifteen years old he had all the feelings and passions of a man. He knew the world and its vices. He had long since ceased to look upon all things through the painted window of youth. The veil of pleasant delusion no longer obscured his sight—he beheld every thing in its

true colours—the naked, inornate reality. My conversation did all this. I told him what humanity is; I acquainted him with all the different ingredients composing the cup of life—the many and various links which form the great chain of society. Then I took care that he should possess the means of indulging his vicious appetites; I gave him money, money in abundance—I gave him liberty—I suffered him to escape from the confinement of school discipline. On winter evenings, when all of you, Jerningham, were singing your *dulce domus* around the fire, young Leicester was, many a time and oft, wandering at large about the town. And oh! how craftily was every thing contrived; how dexterous were all my machinations! I would talk to my victim about charity. I would tell him that there were starving people in the city whom he might like to relieve—I descanted upon the surpassing delights, which arise out of benevolence and generosity. I said, the regulations of the school prohibited that he should go into the town, but that, unwilling as I was to commit any breach of confidence, I could not help thinking that we were under more imperative obligations to help the fatherless and afflicted—to raise up the fallen and distressed. A few plausible sophistries sufficed to lull all suspicion in the breast of my willing victim. I gave him

money and I told him in what places wretchedness was to be found. I told him to go forth upon a mission of charity, 'But, hark you, my dear boy, I added, there are such and such places in the town—there are houses where lust and intemperance hold their infernal orgies, go not near them as you value your soul. Eschew the very streets wherein they are planted. Shun them as you would a leprosy or a contagion.' Then I would tell him the exact situation of the different houses to be avoided.

"Jerningham, you must be weary of this. I need not carry you step by step adown the descent which I dug for my victim. I corrupted the boy; I cannot tell you half of the schemes which I planned for his undoing. Amongst other very notable contrivances, I suborned a certain actress of the town to way-lay him—young Leicester was ensnared. The woman was clever and astute. Her meretricious stories were eagerly listened to; and she gained the ascendancy over the affections of the boy. She introduced the wine-bottle at my bidding; she taught the young profligate to delight in strong drink. She supplied him with ardent spirits. At sixteen years of age he was a drunkard.

"Do you remember having seen me, one evening, at the cider cellar in Maiden Lane? Your most

unlooked-for appearance in company with young Leicester soon sent me to the upper earth, confused and annoyed beyond measure. The boy was then sojourning in London, having escaped from home under a pretext of an invitation from ~~your~~ uncle. I supplied him with funds—I furnished the fuel to his extravagance. I looked upon him, at that time, as my own. He was my ~~severge~~—the retributory sword with which I smote the man who had injured me. He had already deceived his father; he had already invented a series of the most deliberate and wanton lies: he had already made the first incision in the heart of his doating parent. Lord Leicester saw that his son was spotted—his virtue gone: he felt that the rich promise of the tender plant was blighted: that the full blown flower was perfumeless, though the blossom was so fair and sweet. Verily, I paid back the agonies which he had inflicted upon me: verily, I triumphed, Jerningham, I triumphed, and—I was revenged.

~ But my work was as yet incomplete; for young Leicester was still adorned by many redeeming qualities. He was kind-hearted, and he loved his father; he was sincere in his attachments, generous and open. He had several very amiable characteristics; as yet he was only a profligate; it was my ambition that he should

become a villain—an ingrate—and curse his father.

“ I summoned all my intellectual resources to encompass this crowning machination. I went about the work very skilfully ; but I had not proceeded far when I was checked midway in my career, and I relented : yes, Jerningham, I relented. Remorse came upon me torrent-like. I was saved ;—my victim was saved ; but still I had gone so far, that mine enemy, the elder Leicester, was already marked for the grave ; and all my future efforts were unavailing to divert the stroke which I myself had directed.

“ I will tell you how it was, Jerningham. Not many days after you saw me at the Cider Cellars, young Leicester was dining with me at my lodgings. The wine had flowed liberally between us, and I was somewhat in a discursive mood. I was speaking of foreign countries, and my companion seemed to listen to my narrative with wrapt and curious attention. I told him of the wonders I had seen of the ruins of ancient Rome,—of Pompeii,—of Mount Vesuvius,—of the Sistine Chapel, and the Vatican. I was more than wontedly eloquent upon the subject ; for the wine had loosened my tongue, and, indeed, I had indulged myself freely, in order that my example might induce my victim to exceed. I spake of Italy, of France, and Spain,

the islands of the Mediterranean, and the Archipelago. There are few men who have visited more places in Europe than I have in the course of my wanderings. Well, Jerningham, I was speaking of my travels, when suddenly young Leicester interrupted me. ‘I beg your pardon, Mr. Delaval,’ said he, ‘but have you ever in the course of your peregrinations fallen in with a Mr. Moreton?—’tis a silly question, I know; but—his name, sir, was *Godfray Moreton*.’

“If a thunder-bolt had fallen at my feet, I could not have been more paralyzed. I answered not; I moved not; I was as a statue, without volition, incapable of action. I know not how long I continued thus: I felt a hand upon my shoulder, and I awoke, as it were, from a fearful dream. I heard a voice saying, ‘What ails you, Mr. Delaval; are you ill?’

“I recovered myself. I collected my scattered senses. I saw at once that there was necessity for exertion. I did exert myself. ‘Yes, Leicester,’ I said, ‘I do know,—that is, I *did* know, a person who bore the name of Moreton. But I did not meet him abroad, neither has he ever visited the continent. The mention of this name recalled a series of very painful events, which I have not the courage to touch upon. However, the individual whom *I* knew was not *Godfray*

Moreton : neither is he amongst the living now ; he died about three years since : his name was Walter Moreton.'

"This was quite enough to satisfy Harry Leicester. He was well acquainted with the sensitiveness of my temperament, and there was nothing more probable than that the name of one, whom I had known under painful and extraordinary circumstances, might have affected me in the manner described ; so he took little note of the circumstance, and was proceeding to converse upon some ordinary topic, when I asked him the motive which had prompted him to put this question concerning Godfray Moreton ?

" 'This Mr. Moreton,' said the boy, 'was a friend of my dear father's. I cannot tell you the story exactly, but I fancy that they quarrelled, Mr. Delaval, and parted with mutual curses. I speak ignorantly, however. All that I know positively is this, that my father, one day, said to me, 'Henry, if you should happen to meet any person, wherever he may be, or in whatever condition of life, whose name is Moreton, speak to him,—interrogate him ; ask him if he knows one Godfray Moreton, who was born in the year —— (I forget the date), who was educated at Eton and at Christ-Church, who left England about fifteen years since, and who has never been heard of since. Remember

this, Henry, my child. Consider it an imperative duty; and when I am dead, you will not forget the anxiety of your parent when living,—will you, my dear child? Promise me. I hope, before I die, to make my peace with this same Godfray Moreton; but if I do not, and you should happen, in after life, to meet with him, tell him that I am dead, Henry; tell him that I blessed him before I died, and that I trust he has forgiven me for the injury which I perpetrated against him in the thoughtlessness of youth.’ I know not whether these were his words, but they were something to this effect, Mr. Delaval; and therefore, when I hear of a person who has dwelt much in foreign parts, I always ask him if he has fallen in with this same Godfray Moreton.’

“ We soon parted after this. I did not attempt to sleep all that night. I wept tears of repentance,—and I prayed for the first time, after a lapse of fifteen years. Do you know, that when my heart was teeming with hatred, malice, and vindictiveness, I durst not pray,—I durst not commune with my God,—I was sore afraid. And what did I fear?—perhaps you will answer, ‘ the frowns of an offended Deity?’ No, Jerningham, I feared lest my intercourse with God might soften my stony heart. But that night,—if I were to live until the judgment-day, I should never forget that night,—I

went down upon my knees, I prostrated myself before the Most High ; I wept,—I was in an agony,—I outpoured my heart in the presence of my God. I was accepted ; yes, Jerningham, I was accepted ; and I rose up an altered man. I was even as a leper that had been cleansed. All evil feelings fled from me ; I became gentle as a lamb. I no longer thirsted for revenge ; I now panted to be forgiven. I felt as if a mighty weight had been suddenly removed from my bosom. I felt as Prometheus did, when Hercules slew the vulture, which, for thirty years, had been preying upon the entrails of the martyred Titan. I ceased to account myself as one upon whom the curse of God had fallen ; a ray of hope entered into my soul ; an angel voice whispered in my ear words of comfort and joy. I thought that I heard a seraphic choir singing in rapturous concert, ‘ Rejoice ye, for an immortal soul is saved,—a sinner has repented.’

“ I rose up an altered man. I was tranquil—for fifteen years I had not tasted of serenity, and now I was quite calm—calm as a slumbering infant, and I was at peace with the whole world. My curses were changed into blessings,—my hatred into love,—my revenge into forgiveness,—my wretchedness,—no, Jerningham, I was still an unhappy wretch. But my misery was of a softer nature. I was as a chastened, a stricken man. I

did not feel the wild fire raging in my bosom as heretofore. My soul was not wrenched, as it had been, by a violent and gnawing agony. But I was miserable—quietly, passively, though intensely miserable; for I thought of Lord Leicester and his son, and I cried ‘It is too late.’

“‘I must be up, and stirring,’ I said, ‘there is no time to be lost,’ and on the morrow I nerved myself to the task of demolishing that noble structure which my wickedness had heaped up. I went to Leicester; I told him that I regretted to perceive the course of profligacy which he was following. I told him that he had fallen into evil ways, the dangers of which it was my duty to indicate. I implored him, as he loved his father, as he valued his own happiness, to check himself in his career of vice. My exhortations were impressive, and they were sincere. I had no covert designs; I was no longer the systematic hypocrite; the cold-blooded, heartless villain, recommending sin by condemning it. My conduct was genuine and without disguise. I spoke the truth; I said what I felt; but I did not succeed as I could have desired. At length I summoned all my energies, and told Leicester, *totidem verbis*, that he was ‘killing his poor father.’ The boy was of an affectionate disposition, and he was startled by these words. I saw at once that they had produced

the desired effect upon his mind. 'I have done wrong,' he said, 'there is no denying it. I have deceived my confiding father. I will go home to him and confess my error; I will ask his blessing and his forgiveness. I will leave London this evening;'—and Leicester quitted the rallying-place of pleasure.

"But it is more difficult to eradicate vice than to implant it. Leicester returned to school. I watched over him narrowly; I restrained him; I saved him from many vicious excesses—for I still had dominion over the boy. My exhortations were not wholly inefficient; but I could not restore his soul to aught resembling its original whiteness. He was still a profligate at heart, though he controlled himself, because he feared my reproaches. At length he was removed from Dr. R——'s; I did not lose sight of him then, for I resigned my situation in the school, and I often had an interview with young Leicester. Unknown to the father, we kept up our acquaintance with one another, until the boy was sent abroad, under the guidance of a tutor to travel, and then I lost sight of him for the period of more than a year.

"I often visited —— Castle in disguise; and I saw that its noble owner was rapidly sinking into the grave. It happened, one day, when I was in

the neighbourhood, that Lord Leicester was suddenly attacked by a malady of an appalling nature, and it was supposed that a few days would complete the sum of his existence upon earth. The first step that suggested itself to my mind, was to proceed with all haste to Brussels, where young Leicester was at that time sojourning, that I might bring the boy to the bed-side of his father; but this impulse was evanescent, and it soon gave place to soberer reflections. ‘No,’ I said, ‘I will not quit this place. I must be on the spot, or Leicester may die unreconciled, unblessing, and unblest.’

“A courier was despatched to Brussels, and the son arrived in time to catch the last breath of his father. I was there, Jerningham, I was there,—I stood beside the death-bed of him whom I had loved and hated. I stood beside his death-bed, not as an enemy, or an avenger:—not as I once desired to stand beside it that I might feast upon the death-agony of Leicester; but I stood there with a heart full of sorrow,—with eyes brimful of tears,—a contrite sinner hoping to be forgiven,—a stricken deer suing to be blest.

“I will not dwell with much prolixity upon this death-bed scene; it is too painful even in memory. Young Leicester knelt beside the couch, clasping with a fervid pressure one of his father’s attenuated hands, which ever and anon he lifted up to his arid lips, and kissed, whilst the fears fell upon it

like rain-drops, for he wept piteously. I also was there, but the dying man did not know me; he knew no one, he saw no one but his son; he was growing very faint indeed, but the physician, with finger on his mouth, besought his patient in vain to be silent. Leicester was uttering, in a low tone, his last dying adjurations to his son—‘Henry, my beloved, do you hear me?’ My voice is very feeble, I know, but I cannot, indeed, speak louder. Do not weep, but listen to me, my son. Bend down, lower, lower yet; you have heard me, before now, speak of one Godfray Moreton; we were friends in youth, oh, such friends! but I wronged him, and he fled from me, and he cursed me;—no! not that, Godfray Moreton could not curse, but he left me, and hark you, Henry, I have never been happy since. But lower, lower, do you hear me?’ (He was uttering very distinctly; in reality, his voice strengthened as he more nearly approached death, but he thought that he was growing inarticulate.) ‘Well, my beloved, I have no time to tell you all that I would say, but when I am buried, Henry,—it is a sore thing to feel on your death-bed, that one whom you have grievously injured is unreconciled with you to the last,—but when I am buried, my love, seek out this Godfray Moreton; rest not day or night until you have found him. Tell him, that in my latest moments—that at the last gasp, I blessed him—that I prayed to God, in His

infinite mercy, so to dispose the heart of Godfray Moreton, that he may forgive me before he dies, and that he may not hate me when I am dead. Beseech him to forgive me, Henry, beseech him ——'

"I could abstain no longer—I advanced; I threw myself upon my knees beside his bed; I stretched out my arms towards the dying man, and, weeping like a child, I sobbed out, every word choking me—'You are forgiven, Leicester; I am he—I am Godfray Moreton, and I bless you.' The sick-man raised himself upon his pillow, looked at me steadfastly for a moment, and falling again upon his back, he cried out—'You are not he—Why dost thou seek to impose upon, and to torture, a dying man? Thou art not Godfray Moreton!' I drew a miniature from my breast, and, pointing to it, I made answer—'Surely as this is the portrait of you, Lord Leicester, so surely is he who owns it, no other than Godfray Moreton.' The dying man recognized the portrait—visions of the past rose up before him—a bright smile played for a moment across his wan, sunken face; he was thinking, at least it appeared so to me, of the time when he was young and innocent, and happy as the day was long: 'Ah!' he said, 'this is my portrait—true—true—Henry! my beloved Henry! Look at this picture, and then into

my face! Ah! do you see the likeness? Youth and age—life and death—the beginning and the end. Henry, to this favour you must come at last. Think, think, my boy, before it is too late;’ and then, after a pause, he continued, pointing at me with one lean finger, ‘Henry, do you know that man? How came he in this room? He says that he is Godfray Moreton; but he is not.’ ‘Oh, yes,’ I cried, ‘and, indeed, I am,—I am he of whom you speak, by that picture you may know me; bless me, then; forgive me, Leicester;’ but still he would not believe that I was otherwise than an impostor or a madman.

“‘Do you know him, Henry?’ asked Lord Leicester. The boy had seen me kneeling by the bedside of his father; I was there, indeed, by his permission; he had distinctly heard me proclaim myself as the long-lost Godfray Moreton, and knowing me as he did, he was thunderstruck; he was paralyzed; he thought that it was all a dream; he knew not whether his senses were not wandering; perhaps he did not see aright; it was all a wondrous enigma to the boy; but at length he faltered out, ‘Yes, father, I know him well; he is Mr. Delaval; he is my best friend, the oldest and kindest beside yourself that I have in the whole world.’ ‘Ah! ah!’ cried the dying man, ‘I thought so; he is not Moreton, not Godfray More-

ton, I knew it; but, hark you, the real Godfray Mereton, you remember—the real Godfray ——' and his voice died away, he could articulate no more: these were his last words.

— But the breath lingered yet for some time in its broken tenement of clay, and quitted it not, at last, without many a painful struggle. It is a fearful thing, indeed, when the departing spirit wrenches the frame of a dying man; when the distorted features, the upturned, rolling eye, the heaving chest, the gasping mouth, and the writhing limbs, all tell how dreadful is the death-agony. When the spirit passeth away gently, there is nothing terrible in the sight of death; but the long, continuous, deadly throes—the convulsive paroxysms—the loud and laborious anhelations which tear the sufferer's body, are, indeed, heart-rending to witness. Let me not enlarge upon these things; I saw him die; at long intervals came forth his painful respirations; at length there was a pause of unusual duration,—was it the last? No, another yet, and another,—but now all is over; no sound issues from those motionless lips—no breath from those quiet nostrils; I bent over the soulless corpse,—there was nothing left which spoke of life; still, silent, cold, it was more like a thing of wax, or of marble, than aught beside. I flung myself upon my knees, beside the bed, in an agony; I was

disowned and discredited,—the act of reconciliation was unaccomplished, but I was not, indeed, un-blessed; I was forgiven; Leicester's forgiveness and benediction were upon me. I looked towards the heavens, and exclaimed—'But am I forgiven there?'

"My story is done. You know the rest. You know what Leicester is now. You may see too what he might have been, if I had not corrupted his soul. I have endeavoured to save him, but to no purpose. He is most irreclaimably a profligate. The other night you met a man upon the stairs enveloped in a large cloak, that man——"

"Was Leicester," I interrupted. "It is strange; but through all his disguise I recognized a familiar face; but why this disguise?"

"It is of my seeking. Some time ago it was my desire to dwell in obscurity; a relative of mine was endeavouring to discover me, and—but you understand me. I should have gone abroad, but that I thought the knowledge of my presence would be some check upon poor Leicester's licentiousness. Perhaps, you know that he is dreadfully involved. He gambles. To my certain knowledge he has lost fifty thousand pounds at ——'s. He was never rich. His father at one time was

very much impoverished, and though for many years before his death he had reduced his expenditure, his accumulations were inconsiderable, and he died by no means in affluence. When you met Leicester the other night, he had been seeking assistance from me; I gave him what he demanded of course; it was to liquidate a debt of honour; and he had come up to London on purpose to raise funds for that purpose. As *I* caused him to become a gamester, it is right that I should render the sufferings which accrue from this dangerous propensity as trifling as they can be rendered; but I am utterly unable to eradicate this evil habit from his constitution. I have made him partly acquainted with my history and he forgives me; but he does not know *all*.

“ How powerful is the effect of custom. Even now I sometimes forget that I have no enemy in the world. The other night when you proposed to drink the health of Lord Leicester, I was seized with an uncontrollable fury; I forgot that he against whom I had been plotting vengeance for fifteen years, had gone down to the grave, and had blessed me before he died. This is not strange. The crippled limb of the captive, who has worn the fetter for many a long year, does not reassume its natural elasticity as soon as the manacle is

struck off. Even now there are seasons, Jerningham, when I feel an inordinate craving for revenge, and when I remember myself, I still feel a thirst for something, I know not what; and yet—but I have finished, my friend; I have only to add ‘*Pray for me.*’”

CHAPTER X.

But do you think my brother loves her?

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

This wild-goose chase is done.

Ibid.

I CALLED upon Delaval, on the following morning, and he *complained* of growing stronger and stronger.—“ Mine must be a constitution of iron,” he said, “ or I should have died long before this. I wonder that my restless mind has not worn out its tenement of clay. Well ! let it be, Jerningham, I am happier than I was yesterday—*happier*!—that is not a word with which I have aught more to do ; I ought to say I am less wretched ;” and he buried his face in his hands.

I took my departure, and when I reached home, the porter, who opened the door, put a card into

my hand, and told me that the gentleman who left it, would call again in the course of the morning. The gentleman was Charles Sinclair, and he soon made his appearance, looking as much like Hyperion as anything could possibly be.

We communed for some time together, but our mutual explanations were unsatisfactory. We had both of us exerted ourselves to the utmost, but, in effect, we had done nothing. We were just as far from discovering Everard as we had been upon the first day of our meeting. "For my part," said Mr. Sinclair, "I think that we had better offer a reward, and put the advertisement in the newspaper."

"I agree with you," I answered, "as to the latter, but not as to the former, part of your proposition. Allow me to move an amendment: I think that we had better exercise as much delicacy as we can in the business."

"Precisely so," replied Mr. Sinclair; "but we must not allow delicacy to interfere with our more important duties; we must not suffer it to throw a single impediment in our way."

"You are right, Mr. Sinclair," I said; "we had better, I think, insert an advertisement in each one of the leading journals, but I would postpone offering the reward until all other measures have failed. It is too much like crying a horse or a dog—'Lost, stolen, or strayed.'"

"There is something in that," cried my Titanic companion; "for Everard is exceedingly sensitive."

"Well, then," I rejoined, "my advice is this:" and, taking up a pen, I proceeded to draw up a notice for the newspapers; "My advice, then is, Mr. Sinclair, to insert a simple advertisement of this nature:—'*If this should meet the eye of Everard Sinclair, Esq. second son of the late Charles Sinclair, of Clowdington Hall, Berkshire, he is earnestly requested to communicate with Claude Jerningham, Esq. No. —, * * * Street, London.*' I think that when he sees my name, and is informed by the advertisement that I am in England, he will write to make some inquiries concerning his old friend."

"Nothing can be better," said Mr. Sinclair,— "if you have no objection to your name appearing in this way."

"None whatever," I replied; "besides, I will quote your own words. 'We must not allow delicacy to interfere with our more important duties;' and as all delicacy in this instance must be purely of a selfish nature, I shall throw it aside without any ceremony, having voted it a useless commodity. And now having settled this question, let us talk of something else. You will, of course, dine with me this evening; indeed, if you are not engaged, I will take no excuse, Mr. Sinclair. We

have a small bachelor party, and my uncle will be delighted to see you."

Day after day was buried in the capacious sepulchre of the past, yet I received no answer to my advertisement, and I almost began to despond. At length, on the day preceding that on which my uncle had determined to quit the metropolis for the season, I received an ill-written and ill-spelt letter, signed John Moxon, * * * near Appleby, which informed me that he had read my advertisement in a newspaper, which was taken in at the Crown and Sceptre Tavern, and that he lost no time in acquainting me that a young man named Sinclair, with a wife and a little girl, were lodging in his house,—that they were almost in a destitute condition, having no friends in the neighbourhood, or any money in the world to purchase medicine for the poor young woman, who was lying at the point of death. My correspondent exhorted me to lose no time, for he was sure that if the young woman were to die, Mr. Sinclair would go out of his wits, or very probably follow his wife in a short time to the grave.

And here was a piece of alarming intelligence. I had discovered the residence of my friend only to learn the extremity of his affliction. Fraught with misery as were these tidings, I felt that it was my duty to be firm and collected,—to exert every energy

of mind and body,—to be prompt, and to lose no time. I went forthwith to Mr. Sinclair, I told him the purport of the letter, but I did not suffer him to read its contents; and then I signified my intention of starting that night for Appleby.

Mr. Sinclair said that he would accompany me; but I prevailed upon him not to do so. “No,” I said, “there are various reasons why you had better remain at home,—for your own sake,—for Everard’s sake, do not go. It would be painful to both parties, believe me, it would indeed, to meet under such circumstances as the present. Let me forewarn him of your coming; let me go alone to Appleby. Your companionship would not assist me; you had better remain at home.”

Mr. Sinclair acceded to my proposals; I had not told him the desolate condition in which his poor brother was situated. I thought it prudent only to mention that he was residing near Appleby, and that his wife was suffering from ill health, which I did not represent as very dangerous.

I despatched a servant immediately to secure me a seat in the mail, and then I went forth to visit Margaret de Laurier.

She was alone, but I was a privileged person, and was admitted; I told her of my intended departure for the north, and of the embassy upon

which I was going. How sweet it was to be praised by such lips as Margaret de Laurier's!

Mr. de Laurier was not in ignorance of the feelings, with which I regarded his daughter. I was, indeed, her established suitor, and the Italian was delighted beyond measure by the prospect of Margaret's union with one, whom he already loved with an affection almost parental: and yet I had never yet mentioned the word marriage in the presence of the maiden. I had never *proposed* legitimately; I had always shrunk from the task as something conventional and formal, which did not harmonize with the spirituality of my love; but now that I was about to leave her, I knew not for how long, I deemed it expedient, for various reasons, not to postpone this little ceremony any longer.

The reader will be pleased to learn that I proposed, in due form, and was accepted.

"But,—Margaret, my beloved," I said, "there is one thing that I would ask you before I go. You will think it strange, perhaps, but you must not think it unkind: for there is no levity or wantonness in the feelings which dictate this question; much, however, depends upon your answer. I am foolish and superstitious; a vague presentiment of coming evil has been haunting me for some time. If you knew, as you one day will know, all the

events of my past life, you would not think my fears wholly groundless,—Margaret, you know my brother Frederick ; you have known him for some time ; tell me, has he ever spoken of love in your presence ?”

“ Yes, Claude, yes !” replied Margaret with an arch smile playing around her lips,—“ he has spoken of love in my presence, and to me ; are you satisfied now ?”

I saw, by the expression of Margaret’s face, that there was no great evil to be feared ; but still I was anxious that she should explain herself,—“ What did he say, my own Margaret ? Tell me ; I am dying to know.”

“ Then a few words will save your life,” rejoined Margaret, laughing as she spoke ; “ Mr. Frederick Jerningham said something—it was in this very room, Claude, and in the month of May last, the first week of the long vacation ; he had been dining here with your uncle, and Jaspar Haughton was here, and Sir Seyton Willoughby, and——”

“ What a provoking little creature you are,” I exclaimed, for Margaret was purposely amplifying her story, and pausing between every word, which she uttered with a kind of mock gravity, whilst, at the same time she fixed her large, splendid eyes upon my face, to mark the effect produced upon

me by her sportive, though tantalizing, procrastination.

“What a provoking little creature you are,” said I, “with your long muster-roll of visitors, and the preciseness of your dates and references. One would think that you were giving your evidence before a jury, my own Margaret. I ask you about my brother Frederick, and you tell me a long story about Sir Jaspar Somebody and Mr. Willoughby Haughton.”

“Well, then,” cried Margaret, “I will tell you, without any further circumlocution; that is, if you will promise, beforehand, that you will not be jealous of your brother.”

“Nonsense, Margaret! However, I *do* promise most faithfully.”

“Listen then, Claude, listen! Be all ear, sense, feeling, to understand this awful disclosure. Frederick said something to me one day about—*brotherly love towards all men.*”

“Ah! Margaret, sly one!” I said; “you did this to try my temper. Did I not behave well?—tell me, was I not very patient? I shall reward myself, Margaret!” And I kissed her,—a sweet reward.

But as love-scenes are proverbially dull second-hand, perhaps the reader will be glad to transport his imagination from Mr. De Laurier’s drawing-

room to the interior of the Glasgow mail, where he will find an elderly lady, whose name I do not know,—a certain professor of moral philosophy,—a pert young medical student, and the writer of this autobiography, who had taken his place as far as Appleby, in Westmoreland, to which place he was bound, on a mission of the utmost importance to the welfare of his long-lost friend, and the happiness of his own soul.

I remember nothing about the journey, excepting that it was race-week at Doncaster, and that when we passed through that town, I wished that I had been going no further; for nothing could have been more at variance with the gay scene, which surrounded me, than the melancholy which preyed upon my heart, when I thought of Everard Sinclair. I heartily wished that I had been bound upon a less sorrowful mission.

We arrived at Appleby. I took up my quarters, I think, at the *Crown Hotel*, or whatever may have been the name of the principal house of entertainment, in those days. My first care was to order some dinner, or, rather, some supper, for it was somewhat late when the vehicle, in which I had travelled, deposited its precious burthen at the above-mentioned hotel. No great act was ever accomplished upon an empty stomach,—a truth to which all historians, from Homer downwards, have

amply testified, and which I have credited all my life, as a dogma beyond dispute.

When I had dined, I asked the waiter if there was a place called * * * in this neighbourhood? (For the convenience of the reader and of myself, I shall call this place by the name of Grassington.)

“Yes, sir,” said the waiter, “there is; it lies about six miles to the norward of this town.”

“Are the roads that lead to it pretty good?”

“No, sir, desperate bad; they are undergoing a repair, and are hardly safe after sun-set.”

I looked at my watch, and I saw that it was five-and-twenty minutes past ten. “Then you would not recommend me, waiter, to have a post-chaise out this evening? I have very urgent business at Grassington, and—waiter, you may go for the dessert.”

“Yes, sir.” And I settled myself for the evening, with a bottle of red wine to keep me company, and a volume of *Rousseau's Confessions*, which I found behind the pillow of the sofa. I,—I who had traversed the whole country in search of my friend, upon the very eve of discovering the lost one, halted, for no other reason than that I was weary, and the roads were bad. Yet so it was; ‘I took mine ease at mine inn,’ bent upon enjoying myself to the utmost. I put my feet upon a chair,—I sipped my port,—I cracked my filberts,—I smiled

over my book, with just as much gusto, as if I had been going to be married, on the following morning, to Margaret de Laurier.

But the morning came; and, a little after sunrise, I ordered a post-chaise to be brought immediately to the door, and, whilst they were putting to the horses, I swallowed a hasty breakfast. "To Grassington, with all speed," I said; and throwing myself into the corner of the hard-backed, comfortless vehicle, I abandoned myself to reflections, which were almost as comfortless as the chaise.

Our progress was very slow; for, as the waiter at Appleby had rightly informed me, the roads were "desperate bad;" and the horses, though excellent of their kind, had great difficulty in getting along. However, after a melancholy journey (slower than a "City Progress," which is *lucus a non lucendo*) of an hour and five minutes, I was deposited at the *Crown and Sceptre*,—the grand hotel of the village of Grassington.

I called the landlord. "Mr. Ruddyman," I said, "can you kindly direct me to the house of one John Moxon, who resides in this village?"

"Why, sir, yes," said the landlord, "I might; but as John himself be here in the tap, taking his morning glass, perhaps it will do as well to send he to you."

“ Exactly so, Mr. Ruddyman,” I replied ; and in a few minutes Mr. John Moxon presented himself.

Now John Moxon was an individual who legitimately belonged to the “labouring classes,” and who might have been a very respectable personage, had he not been united in wedlock to a woman, who had “a fortune of her own,” in the shape of a house at Appleby, which was rented at fifty pounds *per annum*, a sum which made John Moxon regard himself in the light of a gentleman, though his neighbours, with one accord, pronounced him the greatest blackguard in the county. And, in sooth, they were not much mistaken ; for the absence of employment had rendered him a poacher, a drunkard, and a vagabond. When a labouring man marries a fortune, he is ruined past all redemption.

“ Your name is John Moxon ? ” I said.

“ Yes, sir ; sure enough, them be the names I go by.”

“ You are the writer, then, of a letter, which I received a few days since, concerning one Mr. Sinclair, who lodges in your house.”

“ No, sir ; I ben’t the writer, but my good ’oman be. My wife, sir, be a better scholard than I be ; and she writ the letter, if you mean one, sir, that was dressed to Mr. Birmingham, Esquire.”

“Yes, Mr. Moxon,” I said, “my name is Claude Jerningham; I have come from London, to make inquiries relating to Mr. Sinclair.”

“I be main glad to hear it,” said John Moxon; “for, may-be, you will pay what he owes us.”

“Certainly, to the last farthing. Now, sit down, Mr. Moxon;” and I rang the bell for some ale.

John Moxon sat down; and I stood up.

“Now, Mr. Moxon, be so good as to tell me whether Mrs. Sinclair is alive.”

“I believe she be, sir; but I don’t know,” replied John Moxon, with an air of inexpressible nonchalance.

“You *don’t know!*—Why, surely, you can tell me whether a lodger in your house be alive or dead, John Moxon?”

“No, sir; my wife concerns herself with looking after these matters. She told me, when I turned in last night, that she didn’t think Mrs. Sinclair would hold out till morning. But I don’t know nothing further, Mr. Churning-man;” and he applied himself to the ale, which had by this time made its appearance.

I never was more disgusted in my life.—“In God’s name, then,” I exclaimed, “make haste, and shew me the way to your house. Though you have no bowels of compassion, I can assure you that I have.”

"Hurry no man's cattle," grumbled John Moxon; and he drained the pot of ale to the dregs.

"Now, sir, I be ready to come; my house ben't a hundred yards off:"—and forthwith we descended, and were soon beneath the canopy of heaven.

I followed John Moxon in silence, and I had presently crossed the threshold of his house.—It was a comfortless-looking dwelling, too large to be called a cottage, and every thing within and without betokened a drunken husband, and an idle unthrift of a wife. The room, into which I was shewn, was unswept, untidy, and unwholesome; every thing was confused and ill-conditioned. The genius of misrule was certainly paramount there.

"I will send my wife to you," said John Moxon, and presently Mrs. Moxon appeared; she was short, ill-favoured, marked with the small-pox, and attired in a tawdry silk gown; she was altogether a loathsome object, but just then I had not time to be disgusted.

"My name is Jerningham; you wrote to me the other day, regarding your lodger, Mrs. Moxon; now tell me, how is Mrs. Sinclair this morning, and Mr. Sinclair,—quick—quick!"

"It be easier to ask that question than to an-

swer," replied Mrs. Moxon, "for they won't let me into their room; the door be locked inside, and when I asked to be let in this morning, Mr. Sinclair did nothing but cry out—'Let me be *quite* alone—quite—quite—alone,' and I suppose, sir, he meant by that his wife is dead, Mr. Jerningham; and as for himself, I shouldn't much wonder if he were gone in the head, for he has been over strange for some days past."

"Good God!" I exclaimed, "then, I must be prompt," and, turning to Mrs. Moxon, I continued, "I shall force an entrance into Mr. Sinclair's chamber; you need not fear upon your own account, I will take the responsibility on myself. Be so good as to bring me all the large keys in the house, and in the event of their failing, send your husband for a pick-lock, and a turn-screw."

"My husband has all them things," said Mrs. Moxon, "for he was once a carpenter by trade."

"So much the better," I said; "desire him to attend me immediately with his tool-chest, and do as I desire you about the keys; I will promise to compensate fully for any damage done to your house, and, at the same time, to reward you handsomely for all the trouble and inconvenience I put you to."

Mrs. Moxon bustled off very readily, and soon returned with the keys and her husband.

“Now,” I said, addressing them both, “be so good as to obey me implicitly?”

Partly awed by the imperativeness of my demeanour, and partly tempted by my offers of remuneration, this exemplary couple put themselves on their best behaviour, and promised to do all that I bade them. “Now,” I said, “lead the way to Mr. Sinclair’s apartment. Make less noise, John Moxon,—stay, take off your shoes.”

John Moxon took off his shoes, but grumbled very much whilst he was doing it.

We ascended the stairs ; Mrs. Moxon first, and John bringing up the rear. “Now,” I said, in a low voice, “Mrs. Moxon, tap gently at the door ; Mrs. Moxon *did* tap the door gently, but no answer was elicited. “Louder,” I said, but still there was no answer. I listened, but I heard no sound ; all within was still as death ; my pulse was as that of a man in the extremity of a mortal fever ; I never, in my whole life, had found it so difficult to control my feelings, but I did control them ; they succumbed to reason ; my strength of mind did not desert me. “Now, Mrs. Moxon,” I whispered, “repeat the words which I tell you, in an audible and persuasive voice, speak as you

are wont always, when you desire to gain admittance."

"Mr. Sinclair,"—the woman repeated aloud the sentences which I whispered in her ear.

"Mr. Sinclair." There was no answer.

"If you please, sir, may I come in? I have brought you some tea for Mrs. Sinclair."

And a voice issued from the room, a loud, shrill, discordant voice, which screamed rather than spake: "Who is there? who wants me?—away! What have I to do with the living?" and then there was a howling laugh, which resembled that of an hyæna.

For some moments I could articulate nothing; "How horrible!" I thought: "Can this be the voice of one whose tones, when last I heard them, were sweeter than the soft cadences of music upon the distant water."

"Now, Mrs. Moxon," I said, "collect yourself. We must be cool."—"Mr. Sinclair, there is a gentleman below who would see you,—Mr. Claude Jerningham." A loud, fearful, frantic laugh, was the only answer we received.

"Mr. Sinclair, and besides this, there is a poor woman below, who wishes to see you—she is starving," and instantly we heard a sound, as of naked feet approaching the door. There was a hand upon the key—I heard the lock grating, and

I trembled all over with excitement. The bolt of the lock was half withdrawn, but it instantly flew back again, and the same shrill voice which we heard before, though a little more softened, and less piercing, cried out, "I cannot help her; tell the woman I have no money; tell her that I also am starving—I have not tasted food these two days."

"Merciful God!" I exclaimed, "and can this really be?"

I hesitated for a moment; I was overcome by the extreme intensity of my feelings; if I had retained my collectedness at this moment, I should have been more, or less, than a man.

But I recovered myself; it was too evident that Sinclair would not voluntarily suffer any intrusion upon his dreadful privacy; yet I said to myself—"We *must* enter—if we tarry we may be too late."

"Now, Mrs. Moxon," I said, "give me that bunch of keys." She gave them to me, and as I received them, my hand shook like the hand of a paralytic.

I tried one key—then another—then a third. At length the bolt of the lock moved—it yielded—it grated upon my ear; a ray of hope entered my soul—the door was unfastened.

I opened it very gently—I advanced—I looked

around the chamber. Horrible ! If I were to live a millennium I should never forget that sight.

There were two windows in the room, the shutters of which were still closed, with the exception of a small portion of the upper section of each, which admitted two distinct streams of light upon the opposite extremities of the apartment. There was something of a Rembrandt look in the *chiaroscuro* of the room, but the whole picture was more horrible than one of Fuseli's wildest imaginings. The light from the further window streamed full upon a white-curtained bed, whereon was lying the recent corpse of a young woman, beautiful even in death. She could not have been dead many hours : her eyes were still open, but they were dull and shrouded ; her eye-lashes singularly long and prominent, had assumed a rigid, wiry aspect, and stood pointedly out from lids, which had the appearance of wax. The general expression of the countenance was that of a languid serenity ; you would hardly have thought that the spirit had ceased to inform it ; there was so much mind still remaining in that inanimate face ; the cheeks were thin and colourless, but there was a certain freshness upon their surface, which suffered them not to wear that ghastliness which a later stage of dissolution produces. A white scarf was fastened around the head, and tied beneath the chin of the

corpse in such a manner as to support the under jaw, which was now somewhat thrust out from its natural position, and projected slightly beyond the upper one: this it was that had compressed the lips, and given to the whole lower part of the face an angular appearance, which had not belonged to it in life. There is always that about the mouth of a corpse which, more than all the other features, telleth that the soul has gone forth from its narrow prison-house of clay.

From beneath this white head-gear I saw emerging rich clusters of light brown hair, which, advancing from either side, intertwined themselves upon the young woman's breast in luxuriant and beautiful profusion. Beside the corpse, or rather upon it, was a baby about a year old, a sweet little smiling cherub, who as yet knew not the meaning of sorrow, desolation, and death, playing with its mother's garments, and pawing with its tiny hands the rigid features of its lifeless parent, in an ecstasy of infantine glee. Oh! what a terrible illustration was that of *the threshold and the bourne*.

The light from the other window fell upon a painter's easel, which supported a large canvass already besmeared with colour. Everard was crouching before it, a pallet was in his left hand, a long-stemmed painting brush in his right. Attired only in a loose open dressing-gown and a pair of

white pantaloons, his neck, his breast, and his feet were uncovered, whilst his long bright yellow hair was thrown back from off his forehead in disordered but still beautiful clusters. Thus sitting, or rather crouching, as I have said, he glared now at the bed, and now at the half-finished picture, for he was painting his wife and child. Then he gibbered, then laughed aloud, then stood up for a minute and threw in a few hasty touches, evidently with the hand of a master. It was a piteous—a lamentable sight. I advanced noiselessly behind him, and looked over his shoulder at the painting. He had not seen me enter the room, for his back was turned towards the door.

It was, indeed, a ghastly picture—yet wild, eccentric, nay, insane as it was, it nevertheless was full of genius. There was Lucy apparelled in her grave-clothes—a portrait of that lovely corpse, as I beheld it upon the bed before me; and there was the terrible image of death, shadowy, indistinct, and hideous, and he was pointing a dart at Lucy, whilst Everard was interposing himself between the monster and his victim, and holding aloft in one hand a beautiful infant, which an angel from heaven was stretching out its arms to take from the afflicted father.

I could scarcely speak; my heart stood still; but at length I said, “Everard!”

He heard me; he turned himself round; he looked at me; he stood up; he confronted me; and shrieking out "Claude—Claude Jerningham!" he tottered forward, and, with a loud cry, fell senseless into my arms.

CHAPTER XI.

See that noble and most sovereign reason,
 Like sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh :
 That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
 Flatter'd my sight.

Hamlet.

I hurried Everard to another apartment, and, whilst John Moxon went with all speed to procure medical assistance, I seated myself beside the bed, on which the sufferer lay, and resorted to the usual expedients for reproducing suspended animation; but with very indifferent success: for the fit was of an obstinate nature, and at one time I almost thought that it was the forerunner of death.

At length he opened his eyes: he shuddered, and then closed them again. I said in a low, soft voice, — "Everard: Everard, speak to me," and I

laid my fingers, with a gentle pressure, upon his thin white hand. It was hot and arid ; he drew it away from me with a languid but petulant motion.

At this moment the surgeon arrived. I looked inquiringly into his face. I scanned his features as a criminal scrutinizes the countenance of the judge, who is about to pass sentence upon him. I looked for life or death in the face of that village apothecary, and I was satisfied ; for wisdom and benevolence characterized the aspect of the man.— I spoke to him ; there was a mild confidence in the tones, which syllabled his answer.

“This is no ordinary case, sir,” he said ; “but the mercy of God may save him.”

“Then there is hope.”

“There is *always* hope ;” and he unbuckled a small case of instruments.

Up to this point my every thought had centred entirely in Everard ;—I now remembered that I had other and important duties to perform. I returned to the chamber of death.—There was a corpse and an infant lying together upon the same bed. The child was asleep upon its mother’s breast ;—the little innocent had crept there for warmth. Its first pleasurable sensations had been derived from that bosom, and now led thither by instinct, it nestled there, wholly unconscious that

the warmth of life had for ever forsaken the cold, clayey, rigid body, whereon the little creature was resting, — cradled and pillowed upon a corpse. “There is a grandeur in the sleep of infancy.”* There is a grandeur in the sleep of death. — I never, in my whole life, have seen any thing more solemn and affecting than this union of infancy and death; — the withered flower and the tender blossom, — the *alpha* and *omega* of life. So still, — so placid, — so serene, — the living infant not one tittle less tranquil than the lifeless corpse, — they were like monumental effigies carved out of white marble. I have often, in after days, paused beside a sepulchral group, and wept over it, because it has reminded me of this mother and child.

On a chair by the bed-side there was a small basin of milk and a fragment of dry bread, which accounted for the healthy and satisfied appearance of the beautiful sleeping cherub, who, in the midst of all this agony and destitution, had felt no suffering, because she was conscious of no change.

I continued to survey the apartment. There was the easel, and the wild picture, to which I have already alluded. There were several books about the room, but there was *THE BOOK* lying on the bed, beside the feet of the corpse. It was open.

* Wordsworth.

I took it up;—my eyes fell upon the ensuing passage;—I hailed it as a mandate from God.

“Take this child away, and nurse it for me,
and I will give thee thy wages.”*

I felt, when I had read this, as though I had been appointed by the Most Highest, as the especial guardian of Everard's child. I took up the baby in my arms; the action awakened it, and the little innocent unclosed its eyes and smiled upon me. It betrayed no symptom of fear. I was the child's friend, and the child seemed to know that I was such.

I kissed her, and the little girl clung to me.—My tears fell upon her cheeks; they were not the first that had fallen there.

I uttered a short prayer.—“Father, I have heard thy voice. Thou hast spoken to thy servant, through thy book. I accept the office Thou hast delegated to me. As long as Thou sufferest me to abide upon the earth, never shall this child want a friend. Let my vow be registered, O Lord! and give me strength, I beseech Thee, not to break it.”

Overwhelmed by a rush of feeling, I laid the infant again upon the bed; but it stretched out its little arms imploring me to resume my charge;

* Exodus.

I *did* resume it ; I pressed the child to my bosom, and it seemed quite happy. What powerful eloquence there is in the silent gestures of childhood, how irresistible is every appeal, how subduing, how softening ! When the ear is not spoken to, the heart hears most.

There were a number of papers scattered about the room ; I collected them, they were mostly all in Everard's hand-writing,—a few of them, however, were transcripts written in feminine characters, which were the work of his deceased wife. Amongst these papers, I discovered an unsealed letter addressed to Charles Sinclair, and in a table drawer there was a sovereign and some shillings, which Everard did not know that he possessed, as the following letter amply testifieth :—

“ Brother,

“ I am in the last extremity of destitution. My wife is dying upon one side,—my child starving upon the other. You may save them, Charles, if you will. The child is your niece, and has never sinned against you. Oh ! let not the offences of the father be visited upon the innocent *child*.—I have no friends, I have no money,—you will ask me why I do not work ? I have worked, and I have earned money, but I lent my little all last week to save a poor family from destruction.

Why did I do so when my own family was starving? The man promised faithfully to repay me the next day, but he could not, and I was ruined, oh, my brother! as I do to others, so would I be done by.

“You will ask me how I can want, when I have the power to labour in the field? Oh, Charles! Reason not the need. I do want; I cannot work. I dare not leave my wife and my child; I must *watch*. It will end in death and in—*madness*. I wander already. Methinks, I shall soon be no longer your brother

“EVERARD.”

During three days and nights Everard was delirious; he was raving mad; but on the fourth day the violence of his fever was somewhat abated, and my hope was strengthened; for though he was still wild and incoherent, he spake of familiar things, and he seemed to entertain a sort of confused knowledge of realities, which hitherto his wanderings had not indicated. He spake of his wife, he spake of himself and his affairs,—of poverty, sickness, and death. At length he said, “Where am I?”

“At home,” said I.

“Alas! what home? I have had no home since my mother died.”

“ You are at Grassington, Everard,” I said.

“ *Everard!* who calls me, Everard ? No one has called me by that name these many years but my sweet Lucy ; and these are a man’s tones. Bring me a light that I may see him.”

“ Yes, Everard, my friend, you shall see me,” and I was about to rise when the sufferer withheld me by laying his hand upon my arm.

“ Stay,” he cried,—“ stay. I have been sleeping a long time, I think ; and perhaps I am dreaming now ; but that voice,—I have heard it before—it is familiar to me,—I have heard it in my childhood. Do not laugh at me, if I wander, but I think that you are Claude Jerningham.”

“ Yes, Everard, yes I am ;” and I could not articulate another word.

“ I thought so ; ha, let me think !” and he pressed his forehead with the palms of both his hands ; then he continued in a low voice, pausing frequently to recollect himself ; “ yes, I remember every thing ; I feel as though I had just emerged from the grave ; and assuredly my reason *has* been buried for some days. But now I see every thing clearly. My wife,—my poor Lucy,—is dead, and I have been well nigh following her ;—my child,—my sweet innocent Claudine is——” and his voice faltered. He was involved in uncertainty : he hesitated.

Claudine! and thus Everard had named his daughter in honour of his old friend.

“Your child is well and in the hands of a nurse, whom I know to be trustworthy,” said I.

“God be praised! and my poor wife,—is she buried yet?”

“No, Everard.”

“When will she be?”

“To-morrow, Everard. I have arranged every thing for to-morrow.”

“But I have no money,” replied Everard, for he had forgotten every thing but his wife and child. “I have no money to pay for the funeral, and I have no friends in the country.”

“No friends!” I exclaimed,—“what do you mean?”

“I have only one friend in the world, and he is a long way off,—he is in India,—his name is Jerningham—Claude Jerningham, and he loves me.”

“Oh, Everard!” I exclaimed, a variety of contending emotions, some painful and some pleasurable, rendering me almost inarticulate,—“I am that Claude Jerningham,—I am that one friend.”

“It is the voice of my friend,” cried Everard;—“alas! alas! I am wandering again: I could almost swear to that voice, and yet I know that Claude is in India. Bring me a light then,—bring me a light that I may look upon you.”

There was a small fire at the opposite extremity of the room; I went to it and ignited a taper. "You shall see me, my friend," said I, and I let the light stream upon my face.

"It is he; it is he!" cried Everard. "Merciful God! I thank thee for this," and raising his debilitated body, with the utmost difficulty, from its supine position, he threw himself into my arms and wept like a child upon my bosom.

At length Everard said to me,—“I am well; do you know, I am quite well. I must follow Lucy to the grave to-morrow. I shall be up and stirring early in the morning; of course, I must be chief mourner.” I thought that he was beginning to wander again.

“You must not think of such a thing, Everard. It would be madness. Besides, it would be impossible; you could not walk across the room; how then can you walk to church?”

“I think that I *could* walk across the room;” then suddenly checking himself he continued,—“Well, well, I believe you are right; but my daughter, I may see *her*; will you bring the little child to me, Claude? she is your god-daughter, I have named her after you.”

I hurried into the adjoining room, and in a minute the smiling infant was in the arms of its enraptured father.

Everard said something to me. I did not answer, for I was praying. * * * *

MARGARET DE LAURIER TO CLAUDE JERNINGHAM.

— Street, October—, 18—.

“My dearest Claude,

“I rejoice with you. I wept tears of joy when I knew that you had recovered your friend. There is so much coldness in the world,—so much hollowness and falsehood, that an instance of devoted friendship like yours is an oasis in the desert of life,—a solitary spring-flower peeping out through a cleft in the snow.

“Have you ever read any of Robert South’s works? if you have not I beseech you to do so. I alighted upon a passage this morning, which I marked for your perusal, my dear Claude. You shall read it in my hand writing; will it be the less acceptable for that? ‘People young and raw, and soft-hearted, think it an easy thing to gain love, and reckon their own friendship a sure price of any man’s; but when experience shall have shewn them the hardness of some hearts, the hollowness of others, and the baseness and ingratitude of almost all, they will then find that a friend is the gift of God, and that He only who made hearts can unite them.’

“How grateful ought Mr. Sinclair to be for the blessing of your friendship. It is, indeed, a gift from the Most High. I know what it is, Claude, I have tasted of this blessing myself, and, assuredly, I am most grateful.

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“Do not think of deserting your friend. Though your absence is a sore trial to me, I feel happy when I reflect upon the good work, which keeps you away from me. I love you better for making this sacrifice; it is noble; it is generous in you. If you were to leave your friend in solitude and sickness, for my sake, I should be angry with you, Claude. Remember what your companionship must be to Mr. Sinclair at this hour; you can console him,—you can pray with him,—you can *weep* with him. Ay, even by that you will enrich him. Sympathy, in the hour of affliction, is a jewel beyond all price. When you weigh me in the balance against your friend, remember that I have not suffered as poor Mr. Sinclair has suffered,—remember that I need not consolation; and that whilst your presence would only enhance my happiness, it will alleviate the wretchedness of your friend. My cup is full already; Mr. Sinclair’s is a craving void.

“You will not be so unjust as to misinterpret these sentiments. God knows how I desire to see

you, and how painful your absence is to me. But whilst you are doing your duty towards your neighbour and your God, it would be sinful in me to wish that you were otherwise employed, my beloved. You are 'laying up treasure,' and shall I, who love, seek to impoverish, you?

* * * *

"We leave London at the end of the week. I never yet knew my father remain so late in town as he has done this year. We purpose passing a few weeks with the Mount-Herberts, of ——— Park, in H——shire. Lord Charles is the brother of your eccentric friend, whose exploits you were speaking of one day. He is quite a different person, however, being a very domestic married man. From H——shire we are going to a place, a few miles distant from Oxford; but as you will hear from me very frequently, before then, I need not tell you too much prospectively."

MATTHEW JERNINGHAM TO CLAUDE JERNINGHAM.

—— Street, Oct. 18——.

"I little thought, my dear nephew, when I promised, at the end of last month, to write again in a few days from that time, I should be compelled to redeem that promise upon such a melancholy occasion as the present. It is useless to make any

attempt at softening the pain of this dreadful intelligence by any circumlocution upon my part. Words do not alter truth, my dear boy—*your parents are both dead.*

“ Perhaps you will read no further than this,—and indeed I scarcely have the power of lengthening this letter myself,—but a few sentences will suffice to communicate all the knowledge I possess of this melancholy event.

“ Your poor father ‘ put on immortality ’ in the month of May last. He died of a fever at Allahabad ; and your mother, about ten days after, followed her husband to the grave. A disease of a similar nature, brought on by over-exertion of the body, and great mental excitement, whilst attending upon your poor father, was the occasion of her unhappy demise.

“ It would be useless for you to leave your poor friend. You can pay the same respect to the memory of your parents in one part of England as in another. There is not, therefore, the slightest occasion for you to visit the metropolis unless you desire so to do ; I have already directed Watson to see that your mourning be prepared, as I suppose that the wardrobe you have taken with you to Appleby is of rather a limited order. Watson will leave this, for Appleby, the day after to-morrow.”

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

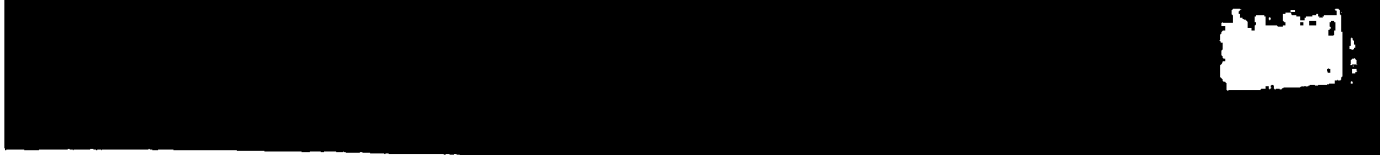
(*An Extract.*)

“I have received from your father’s agents at Calcutta an authenticated copy of his will. Property has been proved to the amount of nearly one hundred thousand pounds. I never in my whole life perused a legal document which has so much pained me as this. I do not pretend to fathom the motives which induced your poor father to dispose of his property as he has done. Let us hope that he was actuated by what he believed to be justice. There is a legacy of one thousand pounds bequeathed to you, my dear Claude,—five thousands to myself as a reimbursement for any money I may have expended upon your education, whilst your brother, Frederick, is left residuary legatee, to the amount of about eighty thousand pounds, nay, more, for your mother’s annuity reverts likewise to him.

“But let not these things distress you ; henceforth you shall be *my* son. Think of other affairs ; I have already told you, that should there be a dissolution of Parliament, I purpose to resign my seat in your favour ; I have just learned from my agent at * * * that my nominee is sure to be

elected. Let me recommend you, therefore, my dear boy, in anticipation of this event, a course of historical reading; and it would be as well for you to resuscitate your knowledge of political economy, which has a long time been lying dormant, but which I trust is not wholly extinguished.

END OF VOL. II.







J E R N I N G H A M ;

OR,

THE INCONSISTENT MAN.



100

JERNINGHAM;

OR,

THE INCONSISTENT MAN.

Man is of dust ; etherial hopes are his,
Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,
Want due consistence.
From this infirmity of mortal kind
Sorrow proceeds, which else were not.

WORDSWORTH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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1836.



JERNINGHAM.

CHAPTER I.

Admit she said she loved you, and to your thinking
Vowed it, (for you say you were contracted)
All this is nothing —

SHIRLEY'S *Duke's Mistress.*

One of earth's best I have foregone,
Yet in another I am rich, a friend !
A perfect one, Aurelio ! —

FORD'S *Lady's Trial.*

“ You have been very sad of late,” said Everard Sinclair to me one day, as we were sitting together in the drawing-room of a pretty little snug dwelling-house, in the pleasant neighbourhood of Buxton.

It was spring-time — many months had passed

since the time when I received the letters, which are contained in the last chapter. It was spring-time — but, perhaps, this announcement may call for a brief retrospection.

When Everard was sufficiently recovered from his indisposition, to endure the fatigues of a journey, I accompanied him into the vicinity of Buxton, where we had been recommended to winter. The elder Sinclair visited us in that place, and remained with us several weeks; at the expiration of which time he quitted Buxton, with much regret, having been summoned by his steward to Cloddington, upon some business connected with his estate.

Everard's convalescence was very slow. The rust of ill health had been too long feeding upon his constitution to admit of its being eradicated completely in a few months. The season was unfavourable to his recovery, for the winter was unusually severe; and it was not until the approach of spring that I ceased to feel a doubt of his safety.

During this interval I had twice visited the southern counties of England. Upon the first occasion I had seen Margaret de Laurier, and passed several delightful days in her society at Lord Charles Mount-Herbert's; but my second visit had been crowned with disappointment. I

was on the eve of starting for Oxfordshire, where the de Lauriers were sojourning at that time, when I received a letter from Buxton, stating that Everard had suffered a relapse, and that very serious apprehensions were entertained of his final recovery. I started, therefore, immediately, for the North, without accomplishing an interview with Margaret. The sagacious reader need not be reminded of the reasons, which compelled me to postpone our nuptials to so late a period. The two-fold loss which I had recently sustained, suggested the propriety of my protracted celibacy. I was an orphan; and it was fitting, under such circumstances, that the mourning robe should not be discarded too hastily for the marriage-garment.

When I reached Buxton, the physician who attended upon poor Everard, informed me with a joyous countenance, that his patient was in a fair state of recovery. I was beyond measure enraptured at this intelligence, for I had already severely reproached myself for quitting the bed-side of my friend. "I will not leave him again," I soliloquized; "I will cleave to him, and when the hour I look forward to, has arrived, we will strike our tents together, and leave this stranger-land in company."

The ensuing dialogue will explain whatever is unsatisfactory in this brief retrospective sketch.

"You have been very sad, Jerningham, of late,"

said Everard Sinclair, one day, placing his hand upon my shoulder as he spoke, and looking inquiringly into my face.

I answered not ; and Everard continued, " You ought not to be thus sad, for nature wears a jocund countenance ; and spring smiles upon us, Claude, as she dons her robe of green, and wreathes for herself a garland of flowers."

" You are poetical, Sinclair," I returned, " but the heart of man does not harmonize at all times with the aspect of Nature."

" Nay, Jerningham ; if there be any thing in the world to which you would not have me allude, tell me what it is, and I will avoid it. There was a grating harshness in your tones just now, which it grieves me to have heard. Tell me in what manner I have offended you—it were unjust to keep me in ignorance of the conduct which has excited your displeasure."

I made no answer. I had nothing to say—I was moody, but I did not know why ; I was angry, but for no reason ; I was sad, and I ought to have unburthened myself.

" Now, Jerningham," continued my friend reproachfully, but not unkindly, " you are not yourself ; you forget what you have been. You were once all gentleness and love ; you are now petulant and morose. You wrong me."

I turned my head round and looked at him sternly—indeed fiercely. God forgive me for what I said! some dæmon had got possession of my soul. “I wronged you—yes, Sinclair, yes—I have *always* wronged you; have I not?” My words, my tones, my looks were all laden with irony.

Everard Sinclair made no reply, but rose from the sofa on which he had been seated and walked hurriedly towards the door.

I was confounded,—a full sense of my ungenerous behaviour rushed upon me; I beheld at once the injustice that I had committed, and I was filled with the most agonizing remorse.

“Stay, Everard, stay,” I cried, and there was a supplicating earnestness in my voice. “I *have* wronged you; I speak not sarcastically. I have been very unkind and very wicked. Will you forgive me? I was possessed by a devil when I uttered those cutting words.”

Everard stood still and confronted me. “I *do* forgive you,” and he looked the forgiveness which his mild accents pronounced.

I took him by the hand. I could not speak. I led him to the sofa, and sat down beside him.

What perversity is there in human nature! People generally say the severest things to those whom they most love.

“Shall you ride to-day, Claude?” said Everard.

“No;” I replied. “You were quite right when you said that I was sad at heart. I *am* sad. I cannot help thinking some mighty calamity is hanging over me. It may be that my sweet Margaret — my troth-plight wife — is dead.”

“How can you suffer such a monstrous presentiment to take possession of your brain? Claude, I think that you are ill. I beseech you to consult Dr. — when he calls to see me to-day.”

“I was thinking, Everard, whether you would object against accompanying me to London next week. Shall we ask Dr. — to-day whether the journey would do you any injury?”

“Certainly; if it suits your convenience, I am quite ready to go. Indeed I am very strong, and well able to endure any fatigue.”

“The fact is, my dear Sinclair,” I resumed, “that several weeks have now elapsed since I heard from Margaret last; my letters have been unanswered of late; I know not for what reason. I have written to Mr. de Laurier, but he has taken no notice of my communication. I suspect that Margaret is ill, and that my friends do not wish to give me pain; or perhaps—but I will not utter it—no, no, that can never be.”

The latter part of this speech was a soliloquy

— I was, in truth, full of fear; a number of conflicting suspicions tortured me; I fell into a reverie.

I heard the door open; and looking up I beheld my house-keeper. Mrs. Moseley was a nice little gossiping woman; and what was of much more importance, she was unequalled in the capacity of a nurse. Upon the present occasion, she made her appearance to deliver me the letters and newspapers which the postman had just left,—an office which she was very unwilling to delegate, at any time, to an underling.

Mrs. Moseley had an unbounded appetite, which was always craving for—news. She luxuriated in a “to-day’s paper” beyond any thing else in the world, and the “first read of it,” as she was wont to express herself, was “like the first cut of a saddle of mutton, better than all the rest.”

Now, as I had never felt this passion for the virgin sheets of a newspaper, I very readily permitted Mrs. Moseley (though, to do her justice, she never requested this indulgence) to enjoy the first fruits she so much coveted; and as she rarely read any thing else but the “births, deaths, and marriages,” and the police reports, she did not detain the papers more than a few minutes after the arrival of the postman.

“ Any letters to-day, Mrs. Moseley ?” I asked ; and at the same time surveying my housekeeper, I saw that there was a look of importance about her, which told me that she had something to communicate of a very consequential nature.

The newspaper was open in one hand,—an expanded acre of type ; and in the other there was a small tray, (by courtesy a salver,) which bore upon its japaned superficies a few tradesmen’s bills, a letter, and a sealed newspaper.

“ I beg your pardon, Mr. Jerningham,” said my housekeeper, “ but be this any relation of yours ?” and she fumbled the paper into my hands, with all the letters standing upon their heads.

“ You’ve got it upside down, sir,” said Mrs. Moseley, and I proceeded to rectify the error in a very leisurely and apathetic manner. I only expected to see some newspaper story about my uncle— an electioneering rumour, or a report of a seat in the cabinet—so I folded the paper very neatly, and smoothed its crumpled surface before I proceeded to read.

“ On the other side, sir, if you please,” said Mrs. Moseley, “ down amongst the marriages in the corner.”

Amongst the marriages! I trembled all over ; my head swam round ; and I could scarcely distinguish the insignificant characters which sylla-

bled one little sentence more terrible than a death-warrant to me.

I felt the blood rush from my face ; I felt myself suddenly grow pale. I clenched my hands, till the pressing nails forced their way through the corners of the paper and almost brought blood from my palms.

Everard laid his hand upon my shoulder, " There is evil intelligence, I am afraid, in that newspaper, Claude ? "

" Oh ! nothing, nothing ; my brother is married, that is all. " Then turning myself towards my housekeeper, " Yes, Mrs. Moseley, " I continued, " this gentleman is my relation — that is — he is *only* my brother. " Mrs. Moseley curtsied and withdrew.

" You are distempered, my dear Jerningham, " said Everard, soothingly ; " tell me what evil has befallen you that your countenance is so suddenly altered. I hope — "

" Oh ! nothing—a trifle—no evil at all. My brother Frederick is married. But it does not concern me. "

" And to *whom*, may I ask, Jerningham ? "

" Oh ! certainly, Everard,—to a lady with whom I am slightly acquainted—to—to—to *Miss de Laurier*. "

Everard, if possible, was more moved by this in-

telligence than myself. There was a pause. We durst not look at one another. I was the first to speak. I assumed a tone of levity—"Come, Everard," I said, "do not be cast down. I don't see that it's a matter of much consequence, after all. You remember what Plato says:—Οὐδὲν κακὸν τῷ ἀγαθῷ οὐδ' αὖ τῷ φαυλῷ ἀγαθόν. My looks and accents belied my words. I was bursting with grief and choler.

Everard did not answer; he could not. His heart was laden with grief and sorrow; but it was sorrow without anger. When I was sorrowful, he grieved with me; but when he saw that I was angry, he counselled and restrained me.

"It does not matter, Everard;" I said; "what matters any thing whilst you are with me? There is a Bible under your hand; will you give it to me? Do you know, Sinclair, that there is a remarkable passage in Deuteronomy, which has often struck me as being forcibly, though subduedly, expressive of the superior claims, which friendship possesses above all the ties of relationship, or even of the married state. 'If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or *thy friend which is thine own soul*, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, thou shalt not consent

unto him.* Mark, Everard, the climax here—the gradation of dearness—the serial ascent. The friend is elevated above all the rest—the last named and the most valued, even above the wife of one's bosom and the children of one's own loins.”

“ Yes,” I continued, “ I must bear—I must bear my sorrows like a man. It would have been better had she died though, Everard,—had her body perished ere her soul had been corrupted. She is spotted now, alas! poor thing!—she has committed incest with my brother. She was united to me in the presence of her God—she breathed her vows of constancy to me, leaning upon my bosom—she was mine; and now she is —. And yet I will not curse him, Everard: I will pray for him—I will—out upon it, I cannot! The words die away in my throat; I cannot bless him, I cannot indeed. ‘I speak more than a God, yet am less than a man.’”

“ Perhaps,” said Everard, after a long interval of silence,” this letter may explain something; and look you, Claude, here is another paper, will you open it? It portends something, and yet——”

* My attention was first directed to this passage by one of South's sermons.

“ I will open it, of course—and why not? There is nothing now which can sink me any deeper, Everard,” and I did all that I could to quell my rising indignation. “ Everard, there is insult in this—an Oxford paper directed by my brother. Mark the meaning of this! I see him, there is a sneer of triumphant malice curling his upturned lip. Ah! Frederick, this is truly very kind in you. ‘ Brotherly love towards all men’ — towards *me*; I remember that. ‘ Married at St. — Church, by the Rev. — —, D. D. principal of’—bah! bah! I know all this—but mark the sequel—‘ Mr. Jerningham—splendid abilities and large fortune—the only ‘double-first’ class that was taken at the recent examinations—happy pair set off—’ This is too much—the ‘ happy pair’—oh! Margaret, Margaret!”

I threw down the paper, and took up the letter, which was still unopened on the table. It was a brief despatch from my uncle Matthew, informing me that the ministry, not having been more successful in the present session than in the last, had procured the royal assent to an immediate dissolution of Parliament, and that therefore he (my uncle) recommended me without loss of time to join him, that we might go down to * * * to canvass the electors in company. I had already expressed my willingness to become a senator,

under the auspices of my uncle: and it had been agreed that, upon the advent of a general election, I should be sent for to appear upon the theatre of war. This letter was written upon the day of my brother's marriage, and it was evident that my uncle was ignorant that such an event had taken place.

I gave the letter to Everard. I had already determined what to do. "They shall not triumph over me thus," I thought, "they shall not trample upon me—they shall not know that they have wounded me. I will walk joyously in the sight of men; I will not betray my suffering—I will smile, and jest, and be as others are. Indifference is the best revenge. I will carry myself as though nothing had happened. Mine enemies shall not see that they have destroyed my peace and blighted my happiness. Though my heart be breaking, I will wear a joyous countenance. Grass upon a volcano—roses upon a sepulchre—smiles with a fire in my bosom."

"I start for London, to-morrow, Everard."

"And I will follow you," said my friend.

"You had better not; the journey will distress you, and I must travel post-haste."

"It is better that I should accompany you, Jerningham. You want sympathy, you want consolation, and, pardon me for saying it, you want *advice*."

“My resolutions are unalterable, Everard; I have feelings, I have passions,—I am a man. We cannot all be as you are, Everard, — humanity must break out now and then, despite of philosophy,*—it must.”

“Jerningham, if your resolutions are evil, I tremble for you, I do indeed. You are one who waver not when you are resolved, and who accomplish whatever you propose to yourself. Oh! my friend, do not, at this hour when you most need them, reject my counsels.”

“Excuse me, Everard, I do not need them; my resolutions are not evil.”

“What are they? Forgive my abruptness, but ——”

“You are entitled to, and you shall, know all. My resolution is to comport myself as though nothing had happened. You need not fear the violence of my resentful feelings. I will not even reproach my brother, — not a word, — not a look, Everard. God’s curse is upon them both, and they need not mine to make it heavier.”

“Then why must you start immediately for London?”

* Man will breake out, despight philosophy.

MARSTON’S 2d part, *Antonio and Melinda*.

“ I am going canvassing, — and — and — *court-
ing.*”

“ Courting ?”

“ Ay, *wooing*, Everard. Is all woman-kind
comprised in Margaret—*Jerningham*? She shall
soon read that *I* am married. I will throw myself
at the feet of — Ellen Hervey.”

CHAPTER II.

CUCULUS.—Hark! did you not hear a rumbling?
The goblins are now a tumbling;
I'll tear them! I'll sear them!
I'll roar them! I'll goar them!
Now, now my brains are a jumbling—
Bounce the guns off.

PALADOR.—You name this here hypochondriacal.

FORD.

WILL the courteous reader oblige me by passing over an interval of six weeks, and supposing that the author of this history, now a Member of the Commons' House of Parliament, and the affianced husband of Ellen Hervey, is sitting in the rectory drawing-room at Heathfield, *tête à tête* with his betrothed bride?

“Then you really have taken the old house for us to reside in, Claude? This is very kind in

you," said Ellen Hervey, as we sate together by the open window, inhaling the perfumes of the many-scented flowers which grew so luxuriantly around the house.

I did not answer,—there was no answer required. I was thinking of Margaret de Laurier, *not* of Margaret *Jerningham*,—of the maiden, not of the wife. I sighed, it was a sigh of regret. I could not help thinking of what I had lost.

"Are you sad, Claude?" asked Ellen Hervey, laying her hand upon my shoulder, and looking herself quite sad, though a few moments before her aspect had been full of joyousness.

The smile of affection, with which I replied to this appeal, was genuine; it was not an artifice of kindness, but the spontaneous offspring of love. "I was thinking, Ellen," I said, and I hope to be forgiven for the lie; "I was thinking Ellen, of the many happy days I have passed in that old house, 'when life was luxury, and friendship truth,' and hope was golden-reined, and memory there was none. I was thinking of all this, Ellen, and I sighed, for I could not help it."

"And I, too, was thinking of this; and yet I did not sigh. It is strange that the same thoughts should make you sad, and me happy, my dear Claude. If that were always to be the case, I should think of something that would make me

sad, and then it would make you happy, and I should be happy too."

"My own beloved!" I said, and I drew the maiden towards me until her head rested upon my bosom, and I twined my fingers in her long yellow hair, and I looked into her eyes, and for awhile I forgot Margaret, and Frederick, and all the world, but the young trembling maiden who was cradled in my encircling arms. "My own beloved," I said, "it is not strange, though your philosophy accounts it so. The light of day, the broad beaming sun which gilds the fair landscape, and beautifies the face of nature, shines upon the haunts of wickedness and corruption only to render them more hideous and disgusting."

Ellen did not understand me aright. She looked at me wonderingly, but did not answer. I inclined my head downwards, and kissed her.

"My own little wife!" I said, and Ellen hid her face, for she was blushing.

There was an almost childish simplicity in Ellen's manner and address. It was not the result of a weak understanding, but of an innocent, guileless heart; an artless imagination, and a devoted kindliness of feeling, which was conspicuous in every thing that she did. She was the gentlest, the softest, the most feminine creature that ever clung to another for protection. She was

more like Miranda than any other of Shakspeare's women, and had scarcely seen more of the world than Prospero's daughter had seen, ere she quitted the "wild island" to marry the king's son.

"By the bye," said Ellen, "I am so glad that they have made you a member of parliament. It gives me so much pleasure to see your name in the papers. I used to think the London Journals the dullest things in the world, and when papa used to read them out at breakfast-time, I thought it a great infliction; but now, it is quite different; indeed, Claude, they are quite charming. When you were at ——, I way-laid the post-man until the election was over, and I have kept every paper that mentions your name; I have, indeed, my dear Claude. I am so glad that you are a member of parliament, for I shall like so much to read your speeches."

"And I also am very glad," said I; but my gladness was differently constituted.

I cared not about popular honours; I was not naturally vain; I was cursed with no high-soaring ambition; it was sufficient for me "to do my duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call me;" I looked upon this as the very crown of morality, and I do not now think that I was much mistaken. I had first consented, at the request of my uncle, to put on the senatorial lati-

clave, whenever an opportunity might present itself; and when I was called upon to redeem my promise, an additional motive urged me to exert myself: upon the hustings, in the fervour of sermocination, carried upon the shoulders of the mob triumphantly, "flown with wine" at the public dinner, where I was feasted by my patriotic friends, though to all outward appearance my every thought and feeling was immersed in the business of the election, in reality, I cared little about it; with me it was only a secondary consideration, it was the means—it was not the end; my soul was with Margaret and Frederick. "Yes," I thought, "they will hear all this—they will read my energetic speeches, and my merry laughter-moving jests. They shall see by the public papers that I am as light-hearted and facetious as ever—they shall feel that I am not afflicted by the transgressions of the wicked and the false-hearted." Such were the thoughts which propelled me to exert myself—such the feelings which excited me to action. All that I did was constrained and artificial, but I was, nevertheless, unwontedly successful. The fervour of my eloquence—the liveliness of my wit—the energy of my demeanour, and the urbanity of my manners, was the constant theme of eulogium throughout

the neighbourhood of * * *. Yet in all this I was but playing a part—

Like to some boy, that acts a tragedy,
Speaks burly words, and raves out passion,
But when he thinks upon his infant weakness,
He droopes his eye.*

But in my acting there was too much of the comic. I almost exposed myself to the charge of flippancy; I never neglected an opportunity of exhibiting the dexterity of my wit, or the imperturbable good humour of my disposition; I was always ready with a joke, and even my heartiest opponents declared me “a devilish good fellow.” It was my object, in all that I did, to manifest a great flow of animal spirits.

But I must bring back the imagination of my reader once more to the drawing-room at Heathfield. “I wish,” said Ellen, “my poor father were not labouring under this depression of spirits—what a dreadful thing hypochondriasis is: it renders a man wholly unfit to fulfil the duties of life; it would have been so pleasant for my poor father to have ———.” Here she paused—she hung down her head, and blushed.

“I understand you, Ellen,” I said, “it would be very pleasant, indeed, if your father could join

* Marston's 2d Part. Antonio and Mellida.

our hands, and it may be that he will, too ; I have thought about it, and I do not despair."

"Oh, Claude ! if you *can* think of something, I shall love you—no, I cannot love you better ; but my gratitude will be more bountiful though my affection cannot be increased."

"Let us talk about this, Ellen ; the subject may be painful to you, but you must not shrink from it, for the time may come when you will be more than amply repaid for any pangs which may be extorted from you now. What is the last crotchet that has entered your poor father's brain ?"

Ellen wiped a tear from her eye, and answered my query very distinctly,—“He has shut himself up in his bed chamber, and says, that he is forbidden to go thence,—he believes that the room is haunted, but he is more afraid of leaving, than of remaining in, it ;—he declares that there are evil spirits eternally whispering in the apartment ;—he hears them behind his bed, and he has seen them, as he positively avers, dancing in the middle of the room. I know not what idle fancies have not deluded his poor brain of late,—he refuses to see a physician, and my mamma has declined to interfere, saying, that it is no matter, and that his whimsies must go away as they came. Oh,

Claude ! if you would but try to restore my poor dear father !”

“ Your mother has declined interfering,” I exclaimed, “ Good God, Ellen ! what do you mean ?”

“ The truth is,” replied Ellen, “ that she has been reading lately in Lavater a story of a woman who, by constantly watching her hypochondriacal husband, fell into the same indisposition herself ;* and mamma, who has great confidence in whatever she sees in print, thinks that a similar lot may be awaiting her if——”

“ Enough, Ellen,” I interrupted, “ and your father will not see a physician ?”

“ I have vainly endeavoured to persuade him to do so.”

“ Then I must take upon myself the responsibility—I *will* try to restore your father, dear Ellen, and I will set about the task immediately. Will you go, love, and ask him whether he will see me ? I suppose he is aware that I am here.”

Ellen bounded off with an elastic step and a joyous countenance. She was not many minutes absent from me. When she returned, I saw at once that her mission had been successful. I needed no words to assure me.

* See Lavater's *Physiognomy*, by Moore, vol. iv. ed. 1797.

I repaired to Mr. Hervey's apartment. He was sitting in an arm-chair before the fire, although it was the month of June, attired in a striped *robe de chambre*, and a pair of flannel *pejammahs*, or loose drawers. His obesity had diminished very much since last he appeared before the reader. He was no longer a portly gentleman with a round and inflated face, but a gaunt, woe-begone animal, with a rueful and cadaverous countenance, which told that a mighty internal change had taken place within the last year. His eyes were haggard, his cheeks sunken, the corners of his mouth drawn down; and the falling away of the flesh had given an appearance of coarseness to features, which were naturally delicate and even now far from unseemly. In short, he was not the same Mr. Hervey, as he had been ten months before. The squire had been converted into the knight—Sancho Panza into Don Quixote—John Falstaff into Master Slender.

“Ah, Mr. Jerningham,” he said in a languid, drawling voice, “be seated—be seated, my boy; I suppose that it behoves me now to address you as I would my own son;” then he leaned back exhausted in his chair, and fixing his eyes glaringly upon me, he continued, “how fortunate you are to be exempted from the thralldom of evil spirits. You eat, drink, sleep, and are merry; you make

love and prepare for marriage; you are a very happy young man."

"I am, indeed, sir," said I, laying my hand upon my heart, "being about to connect myself with your family. Of course, sir, you intend to perform the ceremony. The knot will be doubly binding if tied by the hand of Mr. Hervey." This was coming at once to the point. I threw out my bait, and it was taken.

"My dear boy," replied the Rev. Gabriel, "it would give me great pleasure upon this occasion to reassume my ministerial duties, but"—and he sighed heavily—"but it is impossible; and I will tell you why. Hark you! incline your ear, or they will hear me—yes, *they* will hear me; I must whisper it:—there are evil spirits day and night infesting this room. They are very small and very sprightly, and they are *quite blue*. Yes, I can assure you they are exactly the very colour of Ellen's eyes; and they dance sarabands all night to the tune of the dead march in Saul. It's quite frightful, I assure you—such antic gestures never were seen—they are dæmoniacs, I'm quite convinced of it, and they have forbidden me, upon pain of their displeasure, to transgress the limits of this room—the *blue* room, you know this is, and these little devils are peculiar to the place."

I did not once smile throughout Mr. Hervey's

narration. When he had finished speaking, I looked unwontedly grave, and said in a very solemn voice, "I have dominion over evil spirits. I know how to cast out devils."

"Blasphemy, blasphemy! my son—you know not what you are saying."

"Not at all, sir. I beg your pardon, but I'll convince you that I speak the truth. When I was in India, I met one day at Serampore an old Brahmin, with a long white beard, reaching almost down to his middle. A white beard upon a black man has a very singular effect, I can assure you; but this, however, is nothing to the purpose,—the old Brahmin was a native of Benares, and had lived there an hundred years. His name was Rajkissen Khan, and he knew all the Shastres by heart; he was so exceedingly learned. Well, sir, I met him by chance in one of the bazaars at Serampore. Serampore is a Dutch settlement on the banks of the Hooghly river,—and no sooner did he see me, for I was on foot, the sun not yet having risen, than he said to me in the language of the country, 'Great king, your highness and your servant were born in the same sacred city. I see by your face that, like me, your lordship first saw the light of day within the walls of Casi the Splendid. May your bones, after death, rest near the relics of Siva!' "

“ Did he tell you all this, my son ?” asked the Reverend Gabriel Hervey.

“ Yes, sir, and a great deal beside, which I do not precisely remember ; however, the Brahmin was right, for I *was* born in the city of Benares, though how the old fellow came to know it, I was very much at a loss to determine. But this is *nihil ad rem* ; the Brahmin and I conversed together, and after awhile he condescended to disclose to me a number of wonderful secrets. He taught me how to read the stars, how to tame boa-constrictors, how to extract volatile salts from the jaw-bones of dead monkeys, how to make snuff-boxes out of cocoa-nut shells ; and lastly, how to cast out devils, or rather perhaps I should say, to expel evil spirits out of doors. I have the recipe in my pocket-book,—I always carry it about with me,—it is written in the Sanskrit language, and is really a very curious document.”

“ May I see it ?”

“ Oh ! dear, no, Mr. Hervey ; I am strictly forbidden to suffer any eyes but my own to inspect it.”

“ But you really think that you could cast out these spirits ?”

“ Undoubtedly. I will go immediately to B—, that I may purchase the ingredients of my charm.” And having said this, I hurried down stairs, and ordered my cabriolet to the door.

"Would you like to come with me, Ellen?" I said. "I am going to a chemist at B—," and then I told her all that passed between Mr. Hervey and myself.

"I will go," said Ellen, "and speak to mamma." And the maternal permission having been granted, we stepped into the cab, and my boy jumped up behind.

The town of B— was about two miles distant from the rectory at Heathfield. In less than a quarter of an hour I was, therefore, at the chemist's. I purchased a quantity of spirits of wine, some salt-petre, some sulphur, and some antimony. I then went to other shops, and bought meal-powder, zinc, and steel-filings, and laden with these different articles, I re-entered my cab, and drove homewards.

As we were returning, Ellen said to me, "I know not how it was, Claude, but somebody told me, one day, that you were about to marry a Miss de Laurier, an Italian lady, and an only child. Indeed, I think it was your uncle who told me; but perhaps I misunderstood him, for Miss de Laurier, I see by the papers, has become the wife of your brother."

I had long ago left off blushing, or assuredly this remark would have called the mounting blood to my cheeks. However, I was very much confused,

and although I prided myself upon a certain readiness of evasion, which rarely deserted me in a dilemma, I confess, that on this occasion, I did not well know what to say. But when words fail, actions are often very useful; so, in this emergency, I applied my whip with a dexterous motion to the ears of my horse, — an application which the spirited animal testified a remarkable distaste for, by setting off at a full gallop, which frightened Ellen Hervey very much, but which I secretly applauded. When I had reined in the infuriated quadruped, and had tranquillized poor Ellen, I said something about Everard Sinclair, and Miss Hervey asked whether it was my intention to invite my friend to reside with us at Heathfield.

“*Invite, Ellen?* He needs no invitation. My home will be always his, until *he* feels disposed to quit it. I hope, my dear, that you do not dislike him. I should be sorry if——”

“My dear Claude, how can you think that I dislike him? I love him for two reasons: firstly, he is your friend; and secondly, he is so very amiable, so gentle, and so kind-hearted, that the poor people of Heathfield will have reason to bless the day when he shall come to live in the village; he is full of charity, is he not? I like to hear *you* speak of him, for you are so eloquent when you do.”

Will it be believed that I did not feel comfortable whilst Ellen was praising my friend? I know not that I was jealous exactly; but, however, it is not my business to apologise for my feelings, but to describe them.

“By the bye, Claude, mamma asked me last night the colour of Mr. Sinclair’s hair, and although I have seen him so lately, I really could not answer the question. It is very odd that I should have forgotten so soon; but perhaps I never remarked it.”

I was as much pleased by this speech, as I had been displeased by the last. I do not think that during the remainder of the drive, any thing else was said worthy of being recorded; at all events, I do not remember it if there were, which amounts to the same thing. *De non existentibus et non apparentibus eadem est ratio.*

I acquainted Mrs. Hervey with the nature of the business I was engaged upon. She thanked me very much, and misquoted three authors.

I then set about my chemical preparations, Ellen acting as my assistant: I had learned the art of portfire-making from an artillery officer in India; besides this, I had been behind the scenes at Covent Garden when they were acting *Der Frieschutz*, so that, altogether, my pyrotechnical knowledge was far from being inconsiderable.

I went up stairs to prepare Mr. Hervey: he trembled like the needle of a compass when I told him that all things were in readiness—"We must darken the room," I said, "and, perhaps, sir, it would be better for you to lie down upon your bed; the light of the fire will be sufficient to enable me to pursue my operations."

Mr. Hervey, with a tremulous voice, replied, "Very well, my son," and resigning himself with the patience of a martyr, he desired me to do with him as I pleased.

I then went to fetch my anti-dæmoniac preparations, and whilst I was re-ascending the stairs, I heard Mrs. Hervey's shrill voice crying out, "Where is Absalom? Take care that my dear little doggy does not go into Mr. Hervey's room! Whatever you do, Ellen, keep a sharp eye upon Absalom. The poor little creature will be burnt;" and then she said something about endangering the safety of her favourite, which was evidently aimed at me, and, therefore, was not heard.

"Are you ready, Mr. Hervey," I inquired.

"Yes, my son," stuttered the Rev. Gabriel; "it will soon be all over, I hope;" and he trembled so violently that I heard all the rings of his bed curtains rattling against the rod which they were strung upon.

By this time I had closed the window-shutters,

so that all the light in the room was derived from an indifferent fire, which sent forth a flickering and uncertain blaze, and made a sort of 'darkness visible,' admirably adapted to the furtherance of my designs. Mr. Hervey lay upon the bed, with his face turned towards the wall, and every now and then a lugubrious groan betokened his uneasy condition. I went up to the fire, and threw into it a quantity of salt, which made the flames of a blue colour, and gave a ghastly appearance to the whole room. I then walked to the bedside of my patient, and asked him whether he would like to be blindfolded; but Mr. Hervey replied in the negative, and declared that he was not afraid in the least, though his teeth chattered, and his whole body shook, just as if he had been seized with an ague-fit.

I had provided myself with a large earthenware pan, which I had borrowed from Mrs. Hervey's dairy-maid, and I now placed it in the middle of the room, whilst I seated myself upon the floor beside it, with my face towards Mr. Hervey's bed, that I might see the effect produced by my machinations, upon the panic-stricken rector of Heathfield. I then, in right earnest, set about the work of exorcization.

First of all, into the earthen vessel I poured a quantity of spirits of wine, which being ignited, a towering flame suddenly started up, and a broad,

clear, red light, blazingly illuminated the room; I suffered the flame, undisturbed, to flare for a few seconds, and then I cast upon it three or four handfuls of salt, which at once subdued the light, and imparted to every object that it shone upon, and especially to my overhanging face, a ghastly preternatural livid hue, of a pale, greenish colour, like that which a corpse wears when it is fast falling into corruption. Then I began in a sepulchral voice, to articulate the words of my spell:—
“*Vos cujusque generis cacodæmones, larvæ, lemures, qualiacumque sint vobis officia, qualiscumque sit vobis natura, vos exorcizo, dimitto, ejicio! Auditis-ne? Ad gehennam vestram ululantes properate! aufugite!—Impero!*”—And when I had pronounced these words, Mr. Hervey, with a courageous effort, turned round his head to scrutinize my proceedings; but no sooner did he behold my green corpse-like face, than he cried out—“Merciful Heavens!” and, trembling from head to foot, he put both his hands before his eyes, and again turned towards the wall, repeating the Lord’s prayer.

“This spell wont work!” I exclaimed; “I must betake myself to another more potent.” Then I threw into the pan a preparation of meal-powder, sulphur and saltpetre, which burned with a white fire, and emitted a strong smell, which, at all

events reached the nostrils, if the light did not reach the eyes, of my patient.

When the white fire had expired, I threw another mixture into the pan, composed of sulphur, chlorate of potash, sulphuret of antimony, &c. which, when ignited, sent forth the most intense and the most beautiful red light, that ever was seen or imagined. It was precisely the same sort of fire as that which we see at the theatres, when Mr. O. Smith rises gently to soft music, through a trap-door in the stage ; or when he vanishes with a ‘ melodious twang,’ in the last scene of a melodrama. In fact, it was perfectly sublime ; and as I wished somebody to see it besides myself, I called out “ Mr. Hervey, Mr. Hervey ; look, sir ! the spell works ! ” but Mr. Hervey exclaimed piously, “ The Lord deliver us ! ” and remained with his eyes shut.

“ I must appeal to his other senses,” thought I ; and I commenced singing in a solemn and unmusical voice, a fragment of an old Hermetic poem, which I had read in Ashmole’s *Theatrum* :—

“ There is a bodi of a bodi,
And a soule and a spryte,
With two bodyes must be knete.

There ben two erthys as I the telle,
And two waters wyth hem do dwelle ;
The ton ys whyte, the tother is red
To quick the body’s that ben ded.”

“ Mr. Hervey ! the spell is working, sir ! — the white fire and the red are burnt out : and now it will soon be over ; for the next stage is the blue, and that is the last, sir. I hope you’re not afraid ? ”

“ Thank God ! ” cried the Rev. Hypochondriac ; “ thank God ! ” and this fervent ejaculation was followed by a long sigh.

“ But you’re not afraid, I hope, sir ! ” said I ; for I must acknowledge, to my shame, that I enjoyed the Rev. Gentleman’s terror, though he was the father of my Ellen, and a very excellent man in his way.

Mr. Hervey endeavoured to assure me that he was not in the least frightened ; but his teeth chattered so much, that he could not articulate the assurance.

“ Never mind, sir ; it will soon be over ! ” I exclaimed, and emptied into the vessel a paper full of blue fire, composed of meal-powder, zinc-filings, sulphur, and saltpetre ; and whilst it was burning, repeated several times, the well-known incantation in Macbeth :—

“ Black spirits and white,
Red spirits and grey,
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You that mingle may ! ”

“ Mr. Hervey !—Mr. Hervey ! I am triumphant. The spell works ; the spell works gloriously ! —

Ite ad gehennam, currite, fugite — caco-demonas vos exorcizo! larvæ — lemures! They are gone, Mr. Hervey;" and I threw into the pan nearly half an ounce of gun-powder, which immediately exploded; and filled the room with a dense sulphureous smoke; Mr. Hervey cried out, "The Lord deliver us!" and I rushed towards the door.

"It is all over!" I cried; "it is all over, Mr. Hervey. I have routed the evil spirits; — I have cast them all out! they are fled!"

"Stop, Mr. Jerningham, stop!" gasped the Rev. Hypochondriac, fearfully; "you are not going to leave me in this state? I beseech you to come back. I intreat you not to leave me alone. At least, open the shutters and give the fire a poke."

"I will, sir!" said I; and unclosed the shutters; having done which, I threw the windows open, in order that the smoke might escape. When the room was tolerably clear, and I had removed my fumigatory utensils, I prepared, a second time, to depart; but I returned before I had arrived at the door.

"Mr. Hervey!" I said; "although I have succeeded in routing this army of malignants, it is incumbent upon you to exert yourself, lest upon some future occasion, they should return upon you. You must resume your ministerial duties;—

you must write sermons, and preach them ; — you must visit the poor, and administer the sacrament. You must begin on next Sunday, indeed you must, Mr. Hervey."

" I don't think that I could write a sermon, my nerves are so terribly shattered : I must take time to collect myself. Perhaps the Sunday after next."

" Delay it, and you are lost !" I exclaimed emphatically ; " as for the sermon, I will write one for you ; take this Bible, sir, and select a text. For the present I will leave you, Mr. Hervey," and I emerged from the haunted apartment.

Ellen was standing beside the door, with a countenance full of anxiety. She was almost breathless with expectation ; she could scarcely ask me whether I had succeeded.

" I cannot yet determine, Ellen," I said, " what may be the result of my experiments ; but if I am not very much mistaken, my endeavours will be crowned with success. The fact of your father's submitting so quietly to this operation is sufficient guarantee for its efficacy, because it proves at once that he has faith in my power ; and there is no greater delusion in believing that I have cast out these spirits, than in originally believing in their existence. I have substituted one hallucination for another, and as the new crotchet which I have

forced upon him, rests solely upon what I have done this day, I shall have no difficulty in convincing him that it is all an imposition throughout."

Eight days after this, Mr. Hervey stood at the altar of his own parish church, to join the hands of a certain young couple, with whom the reader is already acquainted.

That was a memorable day in the annals of Heathfield. There was feasting, and rejoicing, and ringing of bells. The little village from time immemorial, had never seen so many smart equipages, or been visited by so many great people. The ceremony was very impressively performed by the Reverend Gabriel Hervey; and the bride was "given away," as it is called, by the Earl of * *, a cousin of Mrs. Hervey's, who was a diminutive, faded gentleman, with an exceedingly white hand, and a voice like the low breathings of a half-guinea flute in a consumption.

I did all that I could to bring together a great number of people, and certainly I succeeded to admiration; for my wedding was quite *distingué* enough to justify a newspaper paragraph, which I was ambitious of, not out of vanity, but as the reader will guess out of *spite*. The Frederick Jerninghams had been invited to be present at the ceremony, but they had not, as may well be ex-

pected, the moral courage to attend. Lord Leicester was there, in his usual high spirits; Matthew Jerningham and Everard Sinclair, with hearts brim full of benevolence, stood beside me at the altar foot, and implored Heaven to bless me. Mrs. Hervey looked her very best, and the bride's-maids, whose names I forget, shone like the hand-maidens of Venus, and captivated all the gentlemen present.

“'Mongst others of less note,” were the Honourable Theophilus Drake, and Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert. The latter of these two worthies did me the honour of writing my *Epithalamium*, and it was inserted with sundry embellishing asterisks, in the columns of the Morning Post. The verses were very good in their way, being chiefly borrowed from Dr. Donne, — an assertion which I do not make in disparagement of their *soi-disant* author, but in order that I might render justice to the Doctor; that “pleasant poet, painful preacher, and pious person,” as Winstanley alliteratively calls him.

And of all the many people assembled, who was the least joyous? In whose breast was there more of anguish than of gladness? In whose thoughts the greatest leven of despair? Around whose bursting heart was twisted the serpent-coil of desolation? Around *mine*, — around the heart of

the man whom the faithlessness of one woman had piqued into marrying another.

I stood at the altar ; I took the book into my hand. I repeated the sacred promise : I heard the name of Ellen Hervey pronounced, but I was thinking of Margaret de Laurier.

The blessing was uttered. We were man and wife. "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." I heard it, and I became like Nabal, of whom it is said in the scripture, that "his heart died within him, and he became even as a stone."

CHAPTER III.

It is too late ; the life of all his blood
Is touched corruptibly, and his pure brain
Doth, by the idle comments that it makes,
Foretel the ending of mortality.

King John.

The worst can be but death, and let it come ;
He that lives joyless, every day's his doom.

MIDDLETON.

IN the vicinity of Chancery-lane, there is a second-hand bookseller's shop, to which the attention of the reader has already been directed in these pages. It is now the month of September, and the unhappy tenant of the bibliopole's lodgings is lying on his death-bed, and, strange is it, that he has so long survived the disclosure of his dark secret.

Yes, Delaval is dying ! the hand of the annihilator is upon him ; his soul hovers upon the confines of eternity ; he is as ‘ grass ready to be cast into the oven.’

I know not that externally he is much altered since last he appeared before the reader ; perhaps his eyes are less bright than they were, and his lashes a little more prominent ; perhaps his face is somewhat more angular, and his cheeks of a paler hue ; but the change is little observable until you converse with him, and then you feel that he is dying.

But is he alone ? Not quite ! there are two sitting beside him—the physician and the priest ? No ! the one has taken his leave, and the other has been dismissed, but the two who remain by his bedside, are the *friends* of the dying man *ιατροις της Ψυχης*—the physicians of the soul.

The names of these two physicians were Everard Sinclair and Claude Jerningham. The former held a Bible in his hand.

But hush ! for the dying man is endeavouring to lift up his voice : it is, indeed, an effort. His two friends incline their ears, and bend forward, until the rising breath from Delaval’s nostrils is felt upon their cheeks—they catch his faint tremulous accents ; he has not struggled in vain—“ There is comfort, my friends, in that book,” he whispered,

“there is surpassing comfort in that volume : it says that there is always hope—always ! and that the Lord rejoices over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just men that need no repentance ! Is it not written thus ?—and yet,—and yet,” here the sick man writhed painfully on his bed, “and yet I scarcely dare hope, I have sinned so resolutely, so undauntedly, with mine eyes open all the while—with mine eyes open—oh, God !”

“Shall I read to you ?” asked Everard Sinclair, for he felt that there was more consolation in The Book than he had power to devise, and was unwilling to intrude his own when God’s words were in his hand.

“You are very kind, Sinclair,” he replied, “you are very kind; but I have been thinking this morning that we are apt to deceive ourselves when others read the Scriptures to us. The hand of friendship draws the curtain over the dark, but reveals the bright places : it is only from the whole book that we can collect the perfect truth : benevolence may extract balm from its sacred and inestimable pages, to pour into the wounds of the afflicted sinner, but there is much which is not balm—there is much which forbids me to hope.—Oh, God ! what a life has mine been ! and I—I—who have seen the light, and have refused to be

illuminated—I, who have possessed the power of judging, reflecting, discriminating,—I,—for a dying man may speak of these things without censure, whose soul has been informed throughout life by sparks of a superior wisdom—that I should have—oh, my God!—the story of the talents!—the *talents!*”

Again the frame of the dying man was wrenched with an indescribable agony. The dampness stood upon his fore-head, and his countenance became suddenly changed. I saw that his hour was nigh, for he looked not as he had ever looked before; and yet the master-mind which inhabited this brittle and worn-out shell, was still vigorous and unimpaired by the sickness which had preyed upon the body, and the agony which had clung to the soul. The lamp was cracked and broken; the oil of life was running out; but the flame was still burning with undiminished brightness to the last. He was kept alive by the strength of his intellect: if his mind had not supported him, he would have been a corpse long before this; his will was paramount; nature obeyed it; his lower limbs already were dead.

There was a pause of several minutes, which Delaval was the first to break. “I ought,” he said, “to know how to die, for I have been thinking of it now for some years. There is nothing

very terrible in death ; nothing, if it were only to die ;—but to be *judged* ! Oh ! there it is —there is the terror of the leap : *malam mortem non facit, nisi quod sequitur mortem.*”*

“ Do you think, Sinclair,” he continued ; “ that my condition is so very fearful ? The thief upon the cross was redeemed ; but I — I had no mercy when living, and can I hope that it will be shown to me when dead ? Any thing but revenge, Sinclair ; any thing but undying persecution. I have tried ere now to repeat the Lord’s prayer, but I could not. I could not pray for my own condemnation. ‘ Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who have trespassed against us.’ Horrible ! quite horrible — is it not ? for one to think upon who has never forgiven.”

“ You magnify your own frailties,” said Everard ; “ you relented, you forgave,—and will be forgiven. In that very prayer, Delaval, there is abundance of consolation for you ; a man of many virtues and but one crime, may look for the mercy of God.”

“ But *such* a crime !” replied Delaval, and shuddered.

“ You spake just now, of the parable touching the talents,” resumed Everard ; “ you say that your condemnation is written there. I read your

* St. Augustin.

justification in that parable. Remember the creature you were born — what a strange moral organization ! what feelings ! — what sensitiveness ! — what passions !”

“ I ought to have curbed them,” interrupted Delaval ; “ if I had strong passions, I had strong reason to correct them ; if I was sensitive, I was wise also ; if I was wronged, I knew what was my duty. Man is never wholly evil by nature. God never gave him passions that will lead him astray, without giving him those faculties which may correct them. Where the bane is, there also is the antidote. It is no justification in the sight of God, to exclaim, ‘ Thou hast made me such.’ It is only another sin added on to the black catalogue ; a lie ! — a lie ! — a presumptuous ——” then suddenly checking himself, he continued, “ My dear friends, you are very kind to console me thus ; it is charitable in you to seek palliation for my crimes ; but friendship is always one-sided ; ‘ charity,’ as the scripture saith, ‘ hideth a multitude of sins.’ ” *

* How strange it is, that this very simple passage is so often misapplied. It means that charity — which is *affection* — overlooks the faults of those whom it loves ; or perhaps, that a charitable spirit makes allowances for the failings of others ; but it does not mean that charitable actions *counterbalance* a multitude of sins ; and yet, nine people out of ten who quote this Christian

“ I am no sophist,” he continued ; “ I seek not to excuse my errors by any natural proneness to evil which may have been implanted in me ; I ought not to have encouraged it. When Socrates was told that Zopyrus, the Physiognomist, had decided that he was stupid and brutal, a drunkard and a sensualist, because his countenance showed him to be such ; the philosopher calmly replied, ‘ Naturally I was inclined to these vices ; but by exercising the severest self-control, I have succeeded in correcting my faults, and repressing my irregular propensities.’ An answer worthy of a philosopher, whose last moments were as those of a saint.”

I said something about the study of philosophy teaching a man how to meet death with calmness.

“ It may be so ; it may be so ! ” replied Delaval ; “ but it is one thing to die like a philosopher, another like a Christian.”

There was then a long silence ; Delaval closed his eyes, and slept for more than an hour. He lay so still, and his breathing was so inaudible, that we almost thought he was dead. There was a fixed marble look about his features, which made us encourage this belief ; nor was it until Everard Sinclair held a looking-glass over the face of the

aphorism, apply it in the last-mentioned, which is a most erroneous, sense.

dying man, that we ceased to regard ourselves as watchers beside a corpse.

“He breathes; he breathes,” whispered Everard, “see the mirror is stained,” and we again resumed our seats by the bed-side of the sufferer, awaiting the termination of his sleep.

“What a turmoil,” said Everard Sinclair, “has been the life of this man;—one long struggle, one eternal conflict! He has never known peace in this world; let us hope that it is in store for him in the next.”

“The elements of greatness,” I replied, “nay, indeed, I may add, of goodness, were in this man, until circumstances up-rooted them, and turned a paradise into a wilderness—every garden-flower into a poison-herb—and made harsh dissonance where once was the sweetest music. One day he was an angel upon earth, the next a madman, a dæmon. Oh, Everard! the nature of a man is changed by much wrong. Injuries harden the heart, and the arrow which enters the flesh rankles there and diffuses its venom ineradicably throughout the whole system. The least part of the evil which your enemy does unto you is that which he purposes to do. He who wounds you, who deprives you of a limb—of the substance of your whole house—of the ‘one small ewe lamb,’ which has lain in your bosom and been a daughter to

you—of all that you most love and cherish in the world—has done, as it were, nothing. There is no real evil in the loss of these things. But he who fills your heart with hatred and vindictiveness, who causes you to walk in wickedness and deprives you of your innocence and your tranquillity, does unto you an irreparable injury—an injury to your soul everlastingly.”

Though these observations had been commenced in relation to Delaval, they were finished in allusion to myself. I did not think when I launched my bark that I should steer it to this port; but so it was, that I found myself prating, almost unconsciously, of my own misfortunes. They, who knew me not, would not have thought that my own sorrows were the theme of my discourse, for all that I said was strictly applicable to Delaval—perhaps more than to myself. Indeed there was something similar in our histories which I contemplated with the intensest melancholy. This had never occurred to me until now, nor would it have done, had I not found myself describing, in the same words, and at the same moment, Delaval's sufferings and my own. Everard, who was as another self—a part of my own soul—comprehended the emotions which stirred within me, and he was sad, for his own sentiments were fully in accordance with mine. It was one of his favourite

maxims, that there is no real evil in the world, but that which vitiates the soul of man; and it would have delighted him to have heard me giving utterance to such an ennobling sentiment, had he not been painfully conscious of the feelings which had driven me thus to express myself.

Everard Sinclair was about to make answer, when Delaval, with a sudden start, awoke from his trance-like sleep. He had evidently just shaken off the trammels of a fearful dream, for his eyes glared wildly, his whole frame trembled, and the perspiration, in large beady drops, stood upon his ample brow.

For several minutes he uttered not a word; he stared at Everard and myself as though he were doubtful of our individuality. He, as yet, scarcely knew whether he was sleeping or awake; his eyes were open, but his reason was still shrouded. At length he collected his scattered senses, and outspoke with a stronger voice than that, which had communicated his thoughts, ere sleep had re-invigorated his energies.

“ I have had a terrible dream, my friends—a very hideous and sickening dream. It has made my very flesh to creep, and the hair of my head to stand up. I dreamed that I was a *leper*, Sinclair, a white and crusted lepper; and I went about with a bell and a clapper in my hand, crying out ‘ *Ευλα-*

Βερε,' and all the people fled away when they saw me, and jeered me from afar off. It was horrible ; it was, indeed ; my flesh was like the bark of a tree, and it peeled off and fell by the way-side, and the vultures hovered over my head, and I tried to escape out of myself, but I could not, and my heart died within me, for I was an outcast from my kind—an unclean thing, and God had ' cursed me with a grievous curse,' and to the end of time there was no hope for me.

"Then I dreamed that, as I went along, I came to a fountain, and I stooped down to drink, for I was athirst, and there was a fever in my throat ; and I felt as though live coals were heaped around my heart, and I was faint ; there was an agony and a fear within me ; I feared God and man,—for the curse of both was upon me. I had done evil to my fellows, and for that I was stricken with a leprosy.

"It was a pleasant fountain, and there was grass upon the banks of the pool, into which it emptied its waters : and I lay along upon the grass beside the pool, for I was weary, and the sun scorched me like the fire of a great furnace, and this little spot was cooler than all the country I had travelled over : and I was alone ; there was no one to scout me,—the pointed finger, the upturned lip, the laugh and the voice, were far away from

me, and hope entered into my heart, where it had not been for many years.

“I inclined my head that I might drink, and I saw myself as in a mirror. It cannot enter into your hearts to conceive the horror of that sight. I was an Asiatic, a native of India, born beneath the scorching sun of the tropics, and my pristine colour was a reddish brown, like the wood of the mahogany tree ; but now ! — you cannot imagine, my friends, how hideous is an Indian leper !”

I needed not to exert my imagination, for, alas ! I had *seen* too many. What Delaval had only beheld in a dream I had frequently looked upon in reality ; but I did not interrupt him, though I might have borne witness to the fidelity of his visionary portraiture.

“Yes,” he continued, “there is nothing more horrible in nature than leprosy, upon the dark flesh of one born beneath a tropical sun ; and such did I behold myself in my dream. Oh, God ! it is fearful to think upon. I was not like Gehazi, in the scripture, ‘a leper as white as snow ;’ but my skin was blotched and cream-coloured : it was crustaceous and like badly kneaded dough, or plaster upon the walls of a house, which the sun has blistered and excoriated. It was a fearful sight, and when I beheld myself in the pool, I drew back and trembled, for I was sore afraid ;

but presently I heard a voice, an angel-voice, whose tones were as music, which said unto me, 'Drink, and then bathe thyself, for He who healed Naaman the Syrian, has power also to heal thee !' and I did as the voice bade me. I drank, and the waters of the fountain were more pleasant than thrice-cooled wine ; and when I had drunk, I bathed myself in the pool, and when I had emerged from the water, I looked at myself, and behold my flesh had come again unto me, like the flesh of a little child, and I was clean !"

When Delaval had finished this narration, exhaustion overtook him, and he fainted. This fit was the precursor of death. He had exhausted himself beyond his strength ; but it mattered not, for a few hours are as nothing to one who has been dying, as Delaval had been for years. But still we exerted ourselves, — for on an occasion such as this, one does many a bootless office more for one's own satisfaction, than for the benefit of the person administered to ; — but still we exerted ourselves, I say, to restore animation to the sufferer's frame. It was a long time before we succeeded, and when we did succeed, though his eyes opened, and the muscles of his throat worked, there was so little vitality in him, that he could hardly have been said to live. For many hours he lay upon his back in a kind of torpor, neither uttering a word nor chang-

ing his position once. He breathed at long intervals, and with great difficulty ; the many coverlids which we had thrown over him,—for he frequently complained of cold,—were made to undulate, with a regular motion, by the expansion and diminution of the chest, which accompanied every anhelation. It was night-time ; but Everard and I were determined upon prosecuting our vigils. We sate by the bed-side, and conversed in a low voice ; it was about midnight when Delaval aroused himself from his lethargy, and asked what o'clock it was ; we told him ; he complained of thirst, and we gave him wherewithal to drink ; he then relaxed again into his former state of marble listlessness.

The clock had just struck one, when Delaval again lifted up his voice. All his faculties seemed to have re-awakened ; his voice was loud and distinct ; his eyes were more brilliant than they had been ; there was a look of entire wakefulness about him ; but he shivered, and turning his face towards me, he said, “ I am very cold ; the blood in my veins has become ice ; the current of my life is frozen up, and I am as David was, when stricken in years, ‘ they covered him with clothes and he gat no heat.’ ” And then he shuddered, and his teeth chattered, and he tried to draw up his legs, but he could not, for they were as the limbs of a dead man.

“ I feel as though I were imprisoned in an iceberg,” he said. “ Alas ! what a cold thing death is—cold as December in the north ; but I must not suffer my mind to be frozen like unto my body, for I have much to say ere I die. Listen, my friends, for I have a boon to ask ; when I am dead will you seek out Lord Leicester and intreat him to follow my remains to the grave, for I have made him my heir. I am rich—I scarcely remember the extent of my possessions, but I am wealthy, or rather I *have been*, for just now I am poorer than the vilest beggar in the streets. You will find my will in the desk upon that table, and with it is the miniature portrait, which you have seen of the late Lord Leicester. Take it and give it to his son—it is more precious than the thousands I have bequeathed him. Tell him—but it is no use ; if the image of his dead father will not arouse him, the entreaties of a dying man will be vain and profitless—but it matters not.

“ I have made you, as you are aware, my executors. My friends, I am full of gratitude—I thank you—I thank you both. I would that I could do something for you in the eternal mansions, towards which I am setting out. But whither am I going ? Oh, my God ! ”—and his voice grew fainter and fainter as he continued—
“ and yet that dream, terrible as it was, has filled

me with blessed hope. Perhaps even at the eleventh hour my leprosy may be made clean." Delaval was silent,

" And we

Wept without shame in his society.

I think I never was impressed so much ;

The man who were not, must have lacked a touch
Of human nature."*

Oh ! those are indeed dread moments when we are watching for the flickering spirit to leave the frame of a dying man.

After a while, in a languid voice, the poor sufferer, cried, " Cover me up ; I am very cold ; throw that drugget over me —not there, not there, my friends ; my nether limbs have no sensation, they have long since been dead ; but my shoulders, —thank you, thank you—vah ! vah ! how cold it is. The icy wind of death, the Sansar, is blowing over me."

I procured some additional coverlids and spread them over the dying man ; but they availed not, for the cold was within, and Delaval soon asked me to remove them. " Give me your hand, Sinclair ; and you, Jerningham ;" and he stretched forth his arms. " It is pleasant to die, knowing

* Shelley's Julian and Maddalo.

that we are not utterly friendless. Jesus loved his disciples and called them his friends rather than his servants. "There, I will die thus," and he lay supine with his right hand clasped within Everard's, and his left within mine. Presently he shivered violently, and cried out with a loud guttural voice, "Cold, cold, cold as the waters of Derce!" Then I heard a gurgling in his throat, and at that moment a convulsion seized him; and with a last, but strangely vigorous, muscular movement, he tightened his grasp of our hands, drew them up high above his head, held them there at the full stretch of his arms for several moments, and then the grasp was relaxed: the arm fell heavily and rested where it fell. There was stillness; you would have thought that he slept, and that his dreams were about pleasant things, for there was a bright smile upon his placid face; but it was a smile upon the face of a corpse.

CHAPTER IV.

See'st thou not a pale
Fair girl standing alone, far, far away ?
· · · · ·
I cannot overcome the thought that she
Is like poor Margaret.

GOETHE *translated by* SHELLEY.

Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful ; and the end of
that mirth is heaviness.

Proverbs.

ON the day following, before the sun had gone down, I was nearly forty miles distant from the metropolis ; the powerful animal which I had ridden, though he still exerted every muscle of his frame, was begining to exhibit symptoms of distress ; he moved on laboriously, with head no longer erect, and neck which had ceased to arch itself ; his coat was flecked with foam, and his tongue protruded

wearily from his mouth ; I no longer was sensible of an undulating motion beneath me : I sat uneasily, for a tired horse soon communicates his fatigue to his rider. I was fulfilling the last promise which I had made to the unfortunate Delaval ; I was conveying his last message to Lord Leicester, who was spending the month of September with Lord Charles Mount-Herbert in H——shire.

It was scarcely six o'clock when I entered his Lordship's park ; it was a fine evening, and the scenery around me was uncommonly picturesque, but I was in no mood to enjoy the external beauties of nature ; I was sad, and I journeyed on with my eyes fixed upon my saddle-bows, whilst I reflected on the painful nature of my mission, and thought of poor Delaval's history.

I had not passed the lodge gates very long, when I heard a very well known voice crying out from the side of the road "*Quid agis, dulcissime rerum ?*" And, looking round, I beheld our old friend Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert.

He was alone, that is to say, he had no human companions, but a setter and a couple of pointers, were "dogging the heels" of their master, and looking, like my horse, as though they had done a very good day's work.

His lordship had been shooting, a fowling-piece, stock in rear, rested upon his right shoulder ;

he was entirely *en costume*, and his tall thin figure, apparelled as it was, resembled a young poplar tree, in swaddling-clothes of brown fustian:—"Ah! φιλατε ανδρων—dearest of men!" he exclaimed, for this noble pedant generally translated his græcisms; "ποθεν ηλθες;—whence comest thou, oh! my friend?—τινας προς εδρας, ω φιλε"—and he was puzzled for a verb, so he continued in English—"I am d—d glad to see you;" and asked me to take a cigar.

"'Αγλαας προς εδρας κασιγνητου σου." I replied, determined not to be out-done in scholarship by Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert. "I have come hither in search of our friend Leicester. Is he still sojourning with your brother?"

"Yes," replied Herbert, "unless he has happened to shoot himself within the last two hours; for he has been out with me all the morning. Capital fellow, Leicester! — αναξ ανδρων—the very king of men! but I outwitted him this morning, and I dare say, that by this time, he is mad as a march hare."

"Have you left him in a steel trap?" I asked; "or walked off with all the birds he has bagged?"

"Oh! neither one nor the other," replied Lord Herbert; "but I have left him in an out-of-the-way place, and as he does not know the ground very well, εκτοπος ων, being a stranger in these

parts, he will find it hard to emerge from the labyrinth I have betrayed him into — by Jove though, I outwitted him gloriously. The fact is, I had a little appointment—an *affaire du cœur*—you understand ; or, as we scholars say, *εν πραγμα της καρδιας*,* and a third person, upon these occasions, is *de trop*, so I cut Leicester, and stole away whilst he was lighting a cigar, to visit our game-keeper's daughter ; devilish pretty girl, I assure you, but *μum, σιγατε νον, φιλτατε—ουκ επος* ; not a word as you love me ;” and his little eye twinkled significantly, as he placed his index-finger to the corner of his mouth, and continued, “ I speak confidently to you, Jerningham, because you are a married man, about these little affairs, which if you were a bachelor,” and he looked volumes ; “ I should most scrupulously withhold from you.”

I smiled, “ Why, Mount-Herbert,” I said ; “ your brother's game-keeper, old John Nesbet, when I was here last season, enjoyed as comfortable a state of single blessedness, as any man I know. I hope John has not been dismissed ; I never heard of a Miss Nesbet.”

Poor Lord Herbert was thrown all aback. He let his gun fall to the ground, that he might have

* The author begs to state that he does not hold himself responsible, either for the accuracy or the elegance of Lord Herbert's classicalities.

more time to collect himself. When he had picked it up, which he was some time about, he said that it was the under-game-keeper, whose daughter he had been visiting that morning.

“What ! Charley Williams’s daughter !” I exclaimed, “I saw Charley just now at the lodge, and I gave him half-a-guinea for old acquaintance sake. I stood god-father to his eldest-born, when I was here last year, having taken refuge in his house from a shower on the same day that the brat first saw the light.”

“D—n it, Jerningham,” cried Lord Herbert, petulantly, “you seem to know all my brother’s establishment, as well as the house-steward himself ; but I’m hanged if I know any thing about them ; the girl, may be, is his sister or his mother, for aught that I can tell. At all events, whoever she may be, I’ve given her all my birds,” and he turned his pockets inside out to testify the truth of this asseveration.

What an infinite deal of pains some people take to prove themselves *vauriens*. If they did but consider that a common rake is as despicable as a common prostitute, they would spare themselves the trouble of telling lies to blacken their own fames. For my part, I wish there was “an act,” as Hercules says, “against forgers of love-letters, false braggarts of ladies’ favours, and vain boasters

of counterfeit tokens." They ought to be "ducked twice a-day at the main-yard of the ship of fools."* The man who boasts of his iniquities would cut your throat, if he were not afraid. The murderer is hung upon the gibbet; but the adulterer walks honest amongst men. Society has one law for the man, another for the woman; but morality, which is quite another thing, looks upon the patron and the denizen of the stews with an eye that does not discriminate between them. It is strange that the polluter should be cherished, when the thing polluted is cast into the fire. Is the leper himself to be fondled, and that which he has made unclean to be burnt? Alas! we are fallen in evil days! Morality is at a discount amongst men. The first christian emperor made a law by which seduction was punished with death; but christian emperors now-a-days however, I will return to my story.

Before I had reached the house, I was overtaken by its noble owner, who hailed me with a degree of cordiality which at once flattered my vanity, and awakened some bitter emotions. I had spent a week at Herbert-ford, when I was a bachelor, and the avowed suitor of Miss de Laurier, nay, more, her affianced husband; and now I felt somewhat

* See Marston's *Parasitaster, or the Faunce*.

uneasy when I thought that I was about to enter as the husband of another, his hospitable mansion. But the frankness of his manner, and the unaffected joyousness of his voice, soon rendered me forgetful of this ; he was delighted to see me, and I returned the compliment, for Lord Charles Mount-Herbert was an exceedingly nice person, and a very tolerable sample of what a marquis's son ought to be.

I had despatched a servant that morning in advance of me, with my wardrobe and my gun. He started at sun-rise, and had arrived many hours when I made my appearance at Lord Charles's. I found him waiting for me opposite the house, and just as I was dismounting, Lord Leicester came up and saluted me.

"Jermingham, by all that is most fortunate, my dear fellow. how glad I am to see you !" and his fine animated face looked more joyous and sunny than ever, as he shook me cordially by the hand ; and slipping his arm within mine, accompanied me into the house. "What the devil has brought you here so unexpectedly !" he continued, as we passed along the hall : "for shame, man, to leave your pretty wife, within three months after marriage."

"I will tell you all about it to-morrow," I replied ; "in the meantime, be contented with

knowing that I am here, and never care about what brought me:" and we parted, each of us for our several chambers, as the dinner-bell had already sounded once.

As Lord Charles Mount-Herbert was a married man, and a very hospitable one moreover: there were several ladies sojourning in the house, and when I entered the drawing-room before dinner, I found that it was already adorned with a very pretty scattering of both sexes.

When I attempt to describe the minutiae of society, I am wont to be eminently unsuccessful. I carry off a sort of general impression of the external character of the circles I may be associated with; but I do not care to observe very closely the way people sit, or dress, or eat their dinners, or play at *ecarté*. A rapid glance is sufficient to acquaint me with the general tone of a society; the book of manners I am contented with skimming over; but character I study assiduously. I know whether a man is vulgar or not, but ask me in what respect he differs from others, and I cannot answer the question. But a short acquaintance is sufficient to enable me to analyze minutely the moral characteristics of an individual. I look, as it were, through men. I get at the kernel and throw aside the shell; but all this is nothing to my history.

I was the last to enter the drawing-room. There were eighteen or twenty people in the room, of both sexes, pretty equally divided. There were four ladies at a round table, which was covered with annuals and scrap-books, and engravings, and caricatures. In those days H. B. was not, or assuredly he would have been dominant on that round table, at Herbert-ford. One of the above-mentioned ladies, who was somewhat stricken in years, was reading a very elegant little trifle of Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert's in the *Keepsake*, whilst three sisterly damsels, with pink gowns and straw colour faces, were wondering what was meant by an engraving of an exceedingly fat Apollo, who was represented as walking down *Regent Street*, attended by the Graces *in fresco*. Lady Charles was seated upon a sofa conversing with an elderly spinster and an excessively girlish-looking young woman, who was the wife of Sir Jaspar Jerdan, a superannuated old baronet of seventy, who was playing the part of one of those corpses which Mezentius tied to his victims—the dead united to the living; poor little Lady Jaspar Jerdan!

I advanced to pay my respects to Lady Charles, who was exceedingly glad to see me. She was a great friend of mine because I played with her children, and had painted, when I was last in the

house, some fire-screens for her charity bazaar. Upon the present occasion I asked her after the baby—talked about the school she was founding—offered to be the architect of the building, and begged to be enrolled as “a life governor of such an excellent institution.” Poor little Lady Jaspar Jerdan opened her large sleepy eyes and looked wonderingly at me; whilst my noble hostess pronounced me inwardly to be the most charming young man of her acquaintance; for Lady Charles Mount-Herbert was full of schemes for the amelioration of the poor, and was very unaffectedly charitable, though there were some good-natured people, who declared that it was “all ostentation.”

Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert was playing the agreeable to a very pretty girl, for whose edification he was explaining, in very ornate phraseology, the meaning of the Greek word *Ερως*, which, in our language, signifieth *love*. Leicester was dandling upon his knee the eldest born of our excellent host, a pretty little flaxen-haired boy, whom my friend, with an unfeigned joyousness little short of the infantine glee which his rosy-cheeked pupil exhibited, was teaching the most approved method of playing with a cup and ball. There were two gentlemen in black, who looked like heads of colleges, conversing together in a corner, but upon what subject, being ignorant myself, I cannot in-

form the reader ; whilst a spare hump-backed little man, with a remarkably fine head, and a skin like the sun-burnt parchment of an Indian officer's commission, was explaining to a fox-hunting squire, who inwardly d—d the eyes of the philosopher, the nature and properties of *scent*, according to the exploded principles of David Hartley's Theory of Vibrations, which every body acknowledges to be ingenious, though no one believes it to be true.

Sitting alone by a small table, with averted face, and, to all appearance, engaged upon the perusal of a book, was a lady whose features I beheld not, but whose identity, despite her position, I decided upon immediately that I saw her. There was but one person in the world to whom that alabaster back, and those beautiful dark brown ringlets, which disposed themselves in a peculiar manner upon the white shoulders of their delicate owner—there was but one person in the world to whom those ringlets and those shoulders could have belonged, and that person was the creature above all others, whom I least expected or desired to meet. And yet might I not be mistaken ? for assuredly I should have been forewarned if *Margaret Jerningham* were in the house ?

The lady, whom I now beheld, whether my conjectures were well grounded or not, was ap-

parelled in a black velvet dress, which "the preciousness of her body made sumptuous."* Not a single ornament of any kind relieved the glossy darkness of her drapery, or shone amidst the profusion of her hair; she was in mourning from head to foot, a circumstance which corroborated the first impression her appearance had made upon my mind. "Yes," I said, "she is in mourning for my father, for her husband's father, my excellent sister-in-law."

Her figure was partly turned towards me, but her face was wholly averted; she was alone, and a book was in her hand, but I saw at once that she read not. As I advanced, I surveyed her all over with a keenly inquiring eye; I earnestly desired that I might be mistaken, but all doubt was very soon removed, for, glancing my eye downward, I saw beneath the flowing drapery which enveloped her undulating form, a little foot, which, if I had seen nothing else would, in my mind, have identified Margaret amongst thousands of thousands.

I was not in the least confounded; I had long ago resolved how to act in the event of my meeting Margaret Jerningham: besides, I was one who had schooled my feelings, and who never suffered emotion to absorb my powers of action; I felt as

* Sir P. Sydney.

few have ever felt, at that moment, but I veiled my sensibility; I was a consummate actor; he who feels much, is wronged, yet mixes with the world, *must* act; it is necessary to his existence that he should throw a cloak over the depth of his emotions.

But the reader will be more anxious to learn what I *did*, than what I felt upon this occasion; I went the circuit of the room so as to confront Margaret at a distance; I saw her face, she had seen *me* upon my first entering the apartment, and if the earth had opened, at that dread moment, to receive her, she would have hailed the phenomenon as a merciful dispensation of Providence, and resigned herself delightedly to her fate.

She saw me opposite to her; she could not choose but see me; I advanced with an elastic step, and put on one of my blindest smiles; I threw over my whole demeanour, cloak-like, an air of congratulatory delight, and, extending my hand as I approached her, I fixed my eyes, with a look of kindness upon the pale countenance of the trembling wife, and exclaimed, with a joyous voice,—“ Ah! Miss de Laurier,—I beg your pardon,—Mrs. Frederick Jerningham, I am so glad to see you, and looking so well too. This is, indeed, an unexpected pleasure, a quite unlooked-for delight. And my brother, too, he is with you, of course; 'tis strange that I have not seen Frederick,” and I

looked inquiringly around the room, but Frederick was not there.

Margaret fixed her eyes upon the ground, but spoke not ; it was a mighty effort that saved her from sinking to the earth. Oh, what would she not have given to have escaped from my presence at that moment ? How willingly would she have fled from me, though her exit had been through the gate of death !

“ Is Frederick here ? ” I asked, encouragingly, and at the same time I seated myself upon a chair, which I drew close beside Margaret’s, and then continued in a serene voice : “ Indeed, sister, it will be a sad disappointment if Frederick is not in the house, such a dear good creature as he is, always so kindly disposed towards me in spite of my numerous errors, that I cannot but count him as amongst the first of my *exceedingly good friends*, to the increasing, though still narrow list of which I hope Mrs. Frederick Jerningham will kindly suffer me to add *her* name.”

But Margaret did not lift up her eyes, neither did she speak ; she drooped her head, the book which she held fell heavily to the ground, and her beautiful arms hung down on either side as though they had been destitute of life ; she moved not, she was like a statue of despair, and in spite of my wrongs, I pitied her.

I bent down to pick up the volume that had fallen, and my eyes fell upon the title-page of the book ; it was one that I had given to Margaret.—“ Sister,” I said, and Margaret trembled : *I* trembled also, for I thought that she would have fainted. But, at length, she summoned courage, and looked at me, “ Spare me, Claude ; I beseech you to spare me,” she said, and the tones of her voice were low, hollow, and sepulchral as those of a dying woman.

“ My sister,” I said, and there was tenderness in my accents, “ my sister, are you troubled,—are you ill ?”

“ If you do not desire to kill me,” she replied, in the same low death-like voice, “ if you do not desire to see me fall down a corpse at your feet, call me not by that name, and speak not to me in that voice ; to-morrow, spare me until to-morrow ; I will humble before you ; then I will tell you all, I will keep nothing from you ; but call me not your sister, I beseech you, and speak not to me as a brother speaketh, for you will kill me if you are kind to me, Claude.”

Did I hate Margaret ? No, I had never hated her ! Did I love her ? I feared to ask myself the question ! Was it my desire to torture her ? God forbid ! I only desired to cloak mine own agony—to put on the mask of indifference, and to appear

as though I had risen superior to the wrongs which had been inflicted upon me. But could I do all this—could I smile, and play, and jest, and wear a joyous countenance, without wounding Margaret to the heart? Impossible! yet what was the alternative? To unveil my sorrows—to bare my bosom before the world—to point to it, and cry, “See, how it bleeds,”—to writhe—to howl—to weep, and to exclaim aloud in an agonizing voice, “Surely, never did human creature suffer as I am suffering now!” Was it better to do this, or to mask my feelings? I did not hesitate, I was proud, and I said, “Come what will, the world shall not pity the discarded suitor of one who has proved herself unworthy of me. The serpent may sting, but I will utter no sound—I may die, but I will ‘give no sign,’—I may carry a fire in my bosom, but the world shall not know that it is there.”

Those are the silent griefs that cut the heart-strings,—
Let me die smiling.

“Is my brother here?” I asked a third time, and Margaret answered, “No.”

I was about to reply, when a general move told us that dinner had been announced. We both of us stood up, but Margaret upon first rising was obliged to support herself by leaning against the

table ; she closed her eyes, and I saw by her countenance, that her head swam round, but she speedily recovered, and though she was still very pale, when Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert advanced to escort her into the dinner-room, she had sufficiently mastered her emotions to comport herself with conventional decorum.

As for myself, at the request of Lady Charles, I gave my arm to the tottering old Baronet's beautiful little childish bride, and I was not at all sorry that I had been allotted to Lady Jasper Jerdan.

Margaret sat opposite to me at the dinner-table ; she was much altered since last I had seen her ; she was paler and thinner than she had been when a maiden, and certainly less lovely ; but still she was " beautiful exceedingly ;" and her countenance had lost nothing of that impassioned look which, in my eyes, made it almost divine : on the contrary, the increased pallor which overspread her attenuated face, rather heightened than deteriorated the intellectuality of its expression, and rendered her aspect more than ever like that of an inspired young Pythoness. She sat beside Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert, and on her other hand was Sir Jasper Jerdan ; but although she inclined her ear, she heard not the eloquent appeals of the former, and although she bowed and smiled, she was heed-

less of the assiduities of the latter, who, despite his octogenarianism, was a melting, old, tender-hearted beau.

Determined upon sustaining my part to the last, I appeared to be unusually exhilarated. I was not altogether insensible to the extreme loveliness and the childish simplicity of Lady Jaspar Jerdan, who sat beside me, but my animal spirits were unreal, and my conversation, full of liveliness as it was, passed from my lips with an effort. Though I spoke to the Baronet's bride, all that I said was spoken *at* Margaret. To tell the truth, I was 'showing off.' I know not whether we like to 'show off' most in the presence of one we love, or one we hate: in either case we look upon applause as a triumph,—the laudations of others, in one instance, make us feel that we are worthy of being beloved, in the other that we are not so contemptible as our enemies imagine us to be. What an incentive to action is the consciousness of being loved, or being hated!

It will be acknowledged that, situated as I was, my condition was not of that nature to warrant my falling in love with a third person; but Lady Jaspar Jerdan was irresistible, and before dinner was over she led my senses captive, though she had not found her way to my heart. What an innocent little creature she was! with her fine, large,

sleepy, oriental eyes, and the scarcely developed contour of her pliant, expanding figure, replete with all the thousand graces, which wait upon extreme youth.

How she wondered, yet how delighted she was at hearing me rattle on upon all subjects; flying off at a tangent from a matter of mangoe-fish to a dissertation upon the nature of Invisible Spirits, and a criticism upon the last new novel. She would open her goddess-like eye, and smiling incredulously, exclaim, "You don't say so; what an absurd creature you are!" and then I would look at Margaret Jerningham.

"What ridiculous stories you have, Mr. Jerningham,—I declare that I never knew a person with so many but my poor brother. I think that you knew Charles,—what droll anecdotes he always had!"

"If Lady Jaspar Jerdan," I replied, "will tell me who her poor brother was, I shall be better able to judge whether I knew him; but I am sure," I continued, looking into her face, "that I never saw a countenance in my life that resembled yours, Lady Jerdan. I should have thought that you had been an only child, for such are generally the most beautiful."

"La!" exclaimed my fascinating neighbour, "I thought that you knew me to be the sister of poor

Sir Charles Poroon, who was killed last September in Leicestershire."

"Well!" I said to myself, "beauty does not always run in families."

"By the bye," asked my charming companion, "are you the same Mr. Jerningham who made that long speech in Parliament about the East Indies and the negroes?"

"The *West* Indies, Lady Jaspar, if you please: I am the same humble individual at your service, and I shall be ready at any time to bring forward any measure for the amelioration of society that you will have the condescension to suggest; for there is a newspaper full of senatorial wisdom in that open white forehead of thine."

"How absurd you are!" cried Lady Jerdan laughing, "Sir Jaspar was *once* in Parliament."

"Before I was born," I exclaimed significantly.

"Or your father either," said Lady Jaspar with a sigh.

"In the time of the Walpoles:" I rejoined; "ask him whether he was in the House of Commons on the day that Chatham broke down in the Lords."

Lady Jerdan laughed, and looked at her husband, who caught her eye, and cried across the table, "What's that about me, my love?" and at the same time asked me to take wine.

“ Mr. Jerningham was saying,” replied Lady Jaspar, “ that you were in the House of Commons when Lord Chatham broke down in the Lords.”

“ And so I was,” cried the baronet, quite pleased. “ I had the honour of serving the country during Lord North’s administration; and I was in the house on the identical day that witnessed the last words of Lord Chatham in seventy-eight, half a century ago,—by Jupiter, how time flies !”

“ It does, indeed,” rejoined Lady Jerdan with a sigh. “ I declare that I shall be sixteen to-morrow.”

Insufferably trifling as this dialogue must appear to every sensible reader, I protest that it is a very favourable specimen of the conversation that passed during dinner time between Lady Jerdan and myself. Every now and then, perhaps, a few sparks of wit were elicited, and my sallies upon one or two occasions were more brilliant than those which I have recorded; but, on the whole, it would have been difficult for a man, who, like myself, was accustomed to think deeply, and to talk only when I had something worth saying, to have poured forth more recondite nonsense than did I during those two hours. It was the most laborious undertaking I had ever imposed upon myself in my life. With some people it is an exertion to

talk sense ; with me it is an exertion to talk nonsense.

However, irksome as was the business, my labours were eminently successful. I enjoyed the satisfaction of over-hearing Lady Jerdan declare me "the most delightful man in England;" whilst Lord Leicester, in the presence of Margaret Jerningham, protested that "he had known me since my boyhood, but had never seen me in such high spirits, by many degrees, as on this evening."

My flippancy departed with Lady Jaspar Jerdan ; and the retirement of the ladies was the commencement of a new phasis in my conversational versatility. It was now my object to please the men, so I immediately became a rational animal. I first joined in a general conversation, the subject of which was the Game-Laws, and secured two votes in the Commons, and one (Leicester's) in the Lords, for an amendment that I was about to bring forward at the commencement of the session ensuing. I then turned myself round and attacked the parchment-visaged philosopher with some very debateable opinions of my own concerning the intellectual faculties of the brute creation, which led to a very subtle argument, conducted with a remarkable degree of temper and urbanity upon both sides. From the metaphysician I betook myself to the fox-hunter, and amused him

with a very animated description of a tiger-hunt, which I had never seen, and an elaborate disquisition upon the art of boar-spearing, though I had never handled the *venabulum* in my life. I next addressed myself to one of the gentlemen in black, whom I conceived to be a Cambridge professor, with a question relating to the mechanism of the heavens, and the probable advent of the next new comet; but finding that I had made a small mistake, the gentleman being a colonel in the army who had lately, like Winifred Jenkins, caught "a glimpse of the new light," I immediately shifted my ground, and talked about "fighting the good fight," "the church militant," and "the heavenly hosts," that the soldier and the saint might be equally edified by the tenour of my world-conquering discourse. In short, I had a vein of conversation adapted to the individual propensities of every gentleman present, and gained thereby golden opinions for the extreme versatility of my wit. The fox-hunter declared me "a d—d jolly fellow;" the philosopher, "a very profound young man with a remarkably analytical mind;" and the new-light warrior, with a blessing, pronounced me "a heavenly creature," and ejaculated a pious wish, that all young men were like me, "treading the paths of salvation."

But this was not all; before we quitted the

dining-room, I had convulsed the whole table with laughter. Even the Evangelical Colonel laughed loud, and applauded me ; for I was ridiculing the vanities of the world, and he had no objection to a little seasonable mirth. As for the metaphysician, the uproariousness of his cachinnations abundantly proved him to be a rational animal ; for he laughed the loudest and the longest of the party, declaring all the time that I should be the death of him, and wiping away the tears from his cheeks.

Lord Charles Mount-Herbert and some others, had been conversing upon the condition and prospects of parliamentary eloquence in Great Britain. Lord Herbert, in very pathetic language, deplored the decline of oratory, and talked about Demosthenes and Cicero sufficiently to prove that he knew nothing about either ; whilst old Sir Jaspar Jerdan declared that the speakers in his day,—Chatham, Burke, Townshend, &c., — were to the full as good orators as either the Greeks or the Romans ; adding, “ You should have seen Edmund Burke, when he threw the dagger upon the floor of the house ; I can assure you that it was perfectly astounding.”

“ We have some very good speakers now,” said I, “ but marvellously few orators. There are,—and — and — ” and I enlarged upon the individual qualities possessed by the several members I

had alluded to. "By the bye," I continued, "I will give you a specimen of a debate which I heard one night, just before the conclusion of last session. * * * was the first speaker," — and standing up, I imitated his manner, and his attitudes, and his voice, with such humour, that I "set the table in a roar." Then having resumed my seat for a few moments, I stood up again, and impersonated a second speaker ; then a third, and then a fourth, till every body present was convulsed with ungovernable laughter. I was an admirable mimic, though I rarely exhibited my skill, thinking that such a mountebank talent was contemptible, and unworthy of being fostered by any but professional players, who live by the wages of their buffoonery. Upon this occasion, however, I had an ulterior design, which I was bent upon accomplishing, whatever it might cost me ; so I, for once, condescended to play the puppet, and assuredly I succeeded to admiration. All the various peculiarities of the different speakers, whom I imitated, were hit off with a nicety of discrimination, which surprised as well as delighted my hearers. The precise attitude, the motions of the hand, the gesticulations of the lips, the inflexions of the voice, and the style of language peculiar to each speaker in succession, were portrayed with a humorous fidelity. I distorted my

features, I twisted my body, I disguised my accents; and I was perfectly irresistible. "That's * * *" cried a number of voices, directly I stood up; my portraits were recognized immediately; I needed not to say whom I was imitating. "By Jove!" cried the fox-hunter, who had laughed himself the colour of 'his pink,' "that beats cock-fighting, I'm d—d if it doesn't,—he! he! he!"

When we entered the drawing-room, a broad grin was discernible upon the countenances of us all. It was evident to each of the ladies assembled, that something or other had happened to put us in an exceeding good humour. Such a number of mirth-bespeaking faces they were quite unaccustomed to see, streaming into the drawing-room after dinner.

"What *ever* can it be?" said Lady Charles, "I protest that they seem all very satisfied."

"I think that *I* know," cried dear Lady Jaspar Jerdan; "here, Sir Jaspar, come and tell us what all this laughter is about."

"Mr. Jerningham," replied the baronet,—and the bare thoughts of what he was going to say, revived his dormant risibility, and an immoderate fit of laughter ensued, which prevented him from finishing the sentence.

"I thought," said Lady Jaspar Jerdan, "that it was something about Mr. Jerningham; what a

droll creature he is, to be sure.—Lord Leicester, have the goodness to tell me what has made you all so happy in the dining-room?”

“Some of Jerningham’s good things, Lady Jaspar,” replied my friend,—“some of Jerningham’s exquisite drolleries—he is quite the Yorick of the day—a prodigiously clever fellow, to be sure. I am so glad, Lady Jaspar, that you were not present to have heard him—I congratulate you, I do, indeed,” and Lord Leicester bowed with an air of mock solemnity.

“And, why my lord—why do you congratulate me?” asked Lady Jaspar Jerdan, lifting up her glorious eyes, and smiling with a look of astonishment.

“Because you would have died, Lady Jaspar—you would have laughed yourself into your grave, and then I should have felt myself called upon, as one of your oldest friends, to indite an epitaph for your tombstone, and I certainly am the worst poet, Lord Herbert excepted, in the country.”

“What an absurd creature you are!” cried Lady Jaspar, laughing as she spoke. This was her pet expression, and I delighted in hearing it applied to myself. When a woman calls you very absurd, depend upon it that she thinks you very agreeable.

Every word of the conversation which I have re-

corded reached the ears of Margaret Jerningham. She sat beside a table, at a little distance from the sofa, which Lady Jerdan occupied, apparently engaged with a volume of etchings, which she was turning over rapidly but unconcernedly, for it was evident that she scarcely recognized the nature of the pictures presented to her view : they were engravings, from the sculptured works of Canova, and related chiefly to classical subjects, which Lord Herbert Mount-Herbert was assiduously endeavouring to explain, though his beautiful pupil was almost unconscious of his lordship's animating presence—she heard him not—she saw him not—her every thought was with me ; my words were ringing in her ears ; my figure was before her eyes ; she was unhappy ; it was a great effort of the will that sustained her throughout so many hours, but she upheld herself—she did not control, but she partially veiled, her emotions, though the most indifferent observer could not fail to mark the entire wretchedness of her aspect. Many of those present guessed the cause of her uneasiness ; they knew that I had been engaged to Miss de Laurier, and they marvelled when they first learnt that she had become the wife of my brother. Lord Leicester imputed this altered state of things to freakishness upon my part, and I was well contented he should remain in his ignorance, for the idea of its being

thought that I had been *jilted*, was to the last degree monstrous and insupportable. As for the Mount-Herberts, they were good easy people, and they set it all down to my brother's accession of property which had dazzled the eyes of Miss De Laurier's papa, whose sole desire it was to settle his daughter, and get back to his own beloved Italy, whilst I—I, the discarded one, only knew that the idol of my soul had become the wife of another, and agony of agonies!—my *sister-in-law*.

Margaret Jerningham, beyond all compare, was the most lovely woman in the room: even the lustrous beauty of the ox-eyed Lady Jerdan was dim beside the splendour of her charms. The expanding bud, rich and delicate as it was, rivalled not the full-blown flower. Was it possible that I should look upon Margaret, and not regret the blessing I had lost? *Regret!* what imbecility in the word! I felt as the sinner may feel after death, when he sees the gates of everlasting life closed against him, and eternal darkness enters into his despairing soul.

When Margaret was alone, I seated myself beside her. I pitied her condition, and I said to myself, "I will act the buffoon no longer; I will strive to mitigate Margaret's distress;" but the arrow had taken flight already, and was rankling in her lacerated heart.

Poor Margaret ! what contending emotions warred in my breast upon thy account ! When I looked upon thy pale cheeks, and contemplated thy wasted form, I thought that thou hadst never loved my brother, and that thy heart still clave to me—thy first and thy only love.

I seated myself beside her, and I spake of her father. There was kindness in my voice ; it was the kindness of the heart ; I no longer dissembled.

“ He is in Italy,” said Margaret in a low agonizing voice, “ he is in Italy ;” and then in a whisper, rendered almost inaudible by extreme emotion, she continued, “ Not now—not now, I beseech you, Claude. You are very kind—much kinder than I have been ; but to-morrow you shall hear all. I am a poor, deluded, miserable wretch !”

“ Would you rather that I should leave you ?” I asked. She did not answer, but she bowed her head. Her face spoke to me ; it was full of gratitude and resignation. It seemed to say, “ Do with me as you please. You are much kinder to me than I deserve.” I knew that it implied a desire to be alone, so I rose up and rejoined Lady Jaspar Jerdan.

Presently Lady Charles Mount-Herbert approached Margaret and said, “ You appear wearied

and unwell, my love. I hope that you will suit your own convenience and retire, if it is irksome to remain here ; for nothing is more wretched than to endure the burthen of society when you are tired, unwell, and dying to escape into privacy. I will attend you, my love, if you like. I think some *sal volatile* would restore you, for you look very faint and sick. Shall we go, Margaret, my dear?" and she took Mrs. Jerningham's hand into her own, with a look of quiet beneficence, which was peculiar to our amiable hostess.

Margaret smiled her thanks, and added, " Perhaps it would be better ;" but she framed no excuse for her illness ; she was above resorting to a subterfuge.

The two ladies withdrew together. I sprung forward to open the door. " Good night, Claude," said Margaret faintly, exercising, in the presence of another, the *privilege of a sister-in-law*, to call me by that name.

" Good night, Margaret," and I extended my hand ; it was taken ; and we both trembled. Perhaps, we were thinking of the day, when, *for the first time*, we called one another Margaret and Claude, in the infancy of our ill-fated love.

The remainder of the evening passed off wearily

enough. I played *ecarté* with Lady Jaspar Jerdan, and instructed Lady Charles Mount-Herbert in the art of teaching blind children to read,—a new method invented by myself expressly for her ladyship's charitable institution. I then, at the instigation of Lord Leicester, accompanied my old friend to the billiard-room, where I missed almost every stroke, and narrowly escaped lacerating the cloth, to the great edification of my companion, who pocketed my balls and my money, and played the winning game with considerable address.

To tell the truth, it was a heavy penance. I was longing to withdraw himself to the solitude of my chamber; I had been acting a part long enough, and I earnestly longed for the time when I should be able to throw aside my mask, and to strip off the trappings of my buffoonery. A game of billiards has little in harmony with the divulsions of a bursting heart.

I retired early to my sleeping-room. The distance that I had ridden in the morning was a sufficient pretext for my "setting bedwards" thus soon. When I reached my apartment, a small triangular note upon my toilet arrested my attention. I opened it; it was from Margaret Jer-ningham.

"Claude, do you remember the pavilion, where

but I need not recall it to your memory by any allusions to the past. Be there, if you value my peace of mind, to-morrow morning at the hour of noon. I will meet you there, and you shall know *all* that has wrung the heart of MARGARET JERNINGHAM."

CHAPTER V.

I knew not this hard life ;
I thought the worst was simple misery :
I thought some fate with pleasure or with strife
Portioned us—happy days or else to die ;
But there is crime—a brother's bloody knife.

KEATS.

THE pavilion, or the pagoda, as it was sometimes called, was a funny little fantastic building at the end of a shrubbery-walk, about two furlongs distant from the house. It had been fitted up with very considerable taste, and was a pleasant retreat enough, either in summer or winter time for the studious, the melancholy, the lazy, or the loving—in fact, for all manner of people ; for there were several little apartments beneath the roof, all furnished with sofas and tables, and tricked out with statues and various ornaments, which enhanced the natural beauty of the place, and rendered it absolutely delightful.

I entered the penetralia of the building, having already explored the outer apartments and beheld no traces of Margaret. She was there, in the inner-chamber, awaiting my arrival with a palpitating heart. She sate upon an ottoman, and her bowed face was buried between her hands; she had been weeping plentifully; she was very pale; but still beautiful as an angel. Alas! that suffering should come upon the young, the beautiful, and the gifted. Yet there are some hearts which affliction chasteneth, though others it turneth into stone. "Sorrow," saith the preacher, "is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better." But misery had entered *my* soul, alas! with an evil influence; it brought not healing upon its wings, but it came upon me laden with pestilence. Affliction had not made me clean, but smitten me with the leprosy of guilt. When sorrow cometh hand in hand with sin, alas, for the poor way-farer!

I seated myself beside Margaret. She had heard my approaching footsteps, and lifted up her wan face. "Claude," she said, with a choaking voice, "I thank you for this. It is kind of you—kind—kind"—and the emotions which she vainly struggled to compose, gained the mastery over her and she wept aloud.

"Margaret, Mrs. Jerningham," I replied, but

my words were scarcely articulate, and though I endeavoured to speak soothingly, my climbing sorrows threw a harshness into my tones. "Margaret, let me entreat you to be composed. Why should you weep for that which is irretrievable? Believe me that I am not here to upbraid you," but still Margaret wept.

We sate beside one another in silence. We spake not; but oh! what a history of sorrow did those tears unfold. Mute appellants as ye are, did ye not say, "We come from the heart of one who has done evil and repented. We are shed by a stricken spirit which has not gone, but been led, astray. We are the out-pourings of a contrite soul, and bespeak the sorrows of one who has indeed been fearfully beguiled!"

She wept long and uncontrolledly. Tears have a soothing power; they are the thunder-drops of the heart. Happy are they who can shed them in the hour of deep affliction. Happy are they, whose sufferings have not dried up this fountain for ever!

At length she recovered herself; and slowly raising her drooping head, as the flower does when the rain has fallen, she looked at me earnestly, nay, *wildly*, and grasping my wrist with an impassioned gesture which startled me, and awakened in my mind a suspicion of a horrible nature, she

exclaimed, in a shrill discrepant voice, "Claude, you are my husband's brother, and you ought to have been my husband. Listen to me! but ere I begin my story, answer me a few questions. Yes, I am about to act the inquisitor, for either you have cruelly wronged me, or I have been miserably imposed upon."

She paused. There was a fervour in her address—an energy in the tones of her voice—a wildness in her entire aspect, which appalled me: I trembled for Margaret; she was hovering upon the brink of insanity—and contemplating her fearful condition, my heart sickened to the death.

"Will you answer me, Claude? One word will be enough—one word will be sufficient denial. Your *yeas* and *nays* are more worthy of credit than the most solemn adjurations of those who have told me horrible stories concerning you, which I *now* believe to be the machinations of an evil and deceitful heart. Will you answer me?"

"I will, Margaret."

"Did you ever tell your brother, Frederick, that my father was a pusillanimous wretch, whose courage evaporated immediately that he found an opponent prompt to chastise the impertinencies which he dared to offer, under an impression that he was dealing with a boy?"

"Never."

“ Did you ever say that there is no virtue in Italy, and that you would not put faith in the morality or the honour of a Neapolitan,—profligacy, and an utter absence of principle, being the native qualities of all whose youths have been passed in Tuscany, or whose birth-place the sunny south has been ?”

“ Never.”

“ Did you ever tell him that, although you had beguiled your idle hours, flirting, as you called it, with me,—and although you had found your way into my affections, you never intended to make me your wife; but that you were endeavouring to undermine my virtue, and to—to—to make me your —*mistress* ?”

“ Never !”

“ And yet Frederick told us all these things, and we believed him. Oh ! Claude, Claude, I have been miserably deluded, indeed !”

I did not answer; I was astounded and overwhelmed. It was as though the walls of my house had fallen round about me on every side, and left me amidst the ruins, panic-stricken; I was incapable of any voluntary movement. I was as a stone; the villany of my brother, now for the first time made *fully* apparent, stupified me. I could no more speak than could Niobe when she was

turned into marble, or Lot's wife when she had become a pillar of salt.

But Margaret's energy abated not, "Claude," she continued, and there was an agony in her voice which communicated itself electrically to my soul. "Claude, we have been wronged fearfully; we have been the dupes of a wily impostor. A net has been woven for us, and we have been ensnared. There is no escape open to us now; we must e'en lie down and die,—*die*,—but shall we endure all this?"—and there was a terrible earnestness in her manner,—a wild lustre in her eyes as she spoke,—“shall we endure all this? Let us up and be stirring. Let us arouse ourselves as Samson did of old; they put out his eyes, yet he crushed his enemies. What saith the Scripture, *the book*, as my saintly husband calls it—‘He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it, and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him,’—*a serpent shall bite him*, Claude!”—and her eyes glared terribly like those of a frantic Mænad.

A man, who sees another upon the verge of a precipice, must bestir himself; it behoves him to be resolute. He must not suffer himself to be petrified into inactivity; he must exert himself, and that too at the moment, or blood will be, for ever, upon his hands. Thus, with me,—Margaret's last

address, with a terrible dissonance, grated upon my ear: she was raving,—the words she had just uttered were the outpourings of a wandering intellect,—her bewildered aspect, her passionate gestures, her rapid and vehement utterance, curdled my blood with horror. Her whole demeanour was that of a maniac, and I knew not what might ensue, if I suffered her to persevere in this strain!

“Nay, Margaret,” I said, soothingly, and at the same time I laid my fingers gently upon her arid hand, “Nay, Margaret, be not thus moved; let us forgive; it does not become us to indulge any feelings of revenge.”

“*Forgive!*” cried Margaret, withdrawing her hand from my touch, as though there had been agony in the contact; “forgive!—will *you* forgive me, Claude?” and she threw herself suddenly at my feet, and knelt there, in a supplicating attitude, her arms extended, her palms pressed together, her fingers pointing tremblingly upwards, whilst, with hair thrown back, and eyes upturned, she looked imploringly into my face, and continued:—“Upon my bended knee, humbling myself as I have never done before, prostrating myself even to the dust, I supplicate, for I have sinned against, you; I kneel to, for I have terribly wronged, you. I do not deserve that you should forgive me; I do not deserve that you should

“speak kindly to me. Spurn me, upbraid me, smite me; but let not your everlasting curse be upon my poor soul!”

“Margaret!” and my voice trembled as I spoke, for my heart was quaking with fear—“Margaret, rise up, I beseech you; I have not cursed you; I never will curse you, for *you* have not sinned against me. There, let me assist you to rise;—take my hand, and with it my blessing. — I bless you, Margaret; I have long ago forgiven you.—There, sit beside me, my love,” and I gently raised the kneeling penitent from the ground, and seated her upon the sofa, beside me.

I spake words of comfort in her ear. It was a dreadful task that I had to perform. I soothed, I pacified, I subdued her; I brought back the truant intellect of the beautiful sufferer, and she became gentle as a lamb. The unclean spirit ceased to tear her, the wild lustre of her glaring eyes became dim, and a soft light shone there mildly, in its stead; her countenance, so lately distorted with passion, was now full of tender serenity, and her voice, which extreme agony had rendered shrill and dissonant, became sweeter than honey, and musical as the breath of a lute.*

* Μελιτος γλυκιων. — HOMER.

Συριγγος ως πνοια. — EURIPIDES.

magnified your own transgressions,"
 "You have been the victim, Margaret, not
 the slayer. Let self-upbraidings rend your heart
 no longer, for you are innocent as the little ewe
 lamb, which the rich lord, in the parable, took
 away from his poor neighbour. You have been
 the instrument of another; you have done nothing
 for yourself. We blame not the weapon, but the
 hand that weilds it. We blame not the poor
 bird whose feather wings the fatal arrow, but the
 arm, Margaret, that draws the bow, or rather the
 mind that directs it."

"These are the suggestions, Claude, of a kind
 and charitable heart: but, alas! I have no such
 sophistries wherewith to appease the stings of
 an ever-wakeful and austere conscience, which
 cries out against me day and night, saying,
 'Weep, weep, for thou hast sinned against thy
 neighbour, and done evil in the sight of thy God.'
 Oh! Claude, there is a gulf between us,—it gapes,
 and will gape for ever. We cannot pass it, but
 through the gates,—oh, horrible!—of everlasting
 death. And my iniquity, it was, which made the
 earth to open between us:—my impetuous folly,
 my headstrong passions, my vindictiveness,—be-
 lieving myself to have been wronged,—my pride,
 my credulity, my rashness. When a woman be-
 lieves herself injured, oh! what will she not do?

—Alas ! now, indeed, may I say with Saul, ‘Behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.’ ”

The tears trickled down her face as she spoke; they were gentle tears—tears of sorrow, not of passion : they came not in a ‘ heady current,’ but coursed one another slowly adown her pale, feverish cheeks. The frantic energy of the infuriated Mænad had given place to the tranquil sadness of the patient and world-abjuring vestal.

“ Yes,” she continued, and there was a melancholy sweetness in the tones of her gentle voice,—“ yes, Claude, I have wronged you less—much less in thought than in deed. God is my witness that I believed myself all the while to have been acting as it behoved me to act ; but I was weak and misguided, I knew not what was right, nor was I a free-agent. I will unravel the whole mystery of my conduct, if it still is mysterious to you. At all events it is fitting that you should be made acquainted with the details of this dread history : it is painful, very painful, to expose the wickedness of one’s own husband, but (nay, Claude, interrupt me not, the kindness of your heart shall not lead me aside from that which is just,) it must be told ; though I should feel my heart breaking, I would still go on with my narrative.

“ You remember when you parted from me,

Claude, it was in this very pagoda that we parted. What a beautiful world did this then appear to me ! What a glorious possession was life ! In the balmy air—in the warm sun-light—in the shadows of the trees—in the perfumes of the flowers — everywhere — above — below — around me—on every side there was a blessing. I was full of joy, my heart was lifted up with gratitude. I thought that the great Unseen Spirit smiled upon me with an especial benevolence. There was not one more happy than myself in the multitudinous congregation of the world.

“ I was happy because I was innocent—I was happy because I was beloved—I lay down to sleep in the night-season, and visions of joy beatified my slumbers—I rose up, and the reality of happiness was present to my waking senses. I need not say how entirely I loved you ; it becomes me not to speak of these things : let one sentence, therefore, suffice, I loved you then, and have never loved any other ; my heart was widowed when I believed you to be false.

“ You left me and rejoined your friend at Buxton : it was my desire that you should cleave to that friend ; you cannot think what emotions of pride and thankfulness your generous conduct awakened in my bosom ; I was confident at that time in the entire sincerity of your affection, and I

looked upon your absence from my side not only as a proof of your noble nature, but of your devotion to me ; for I had commanded you upon no account to desert your poor friend, and whilst I was regretting your absence I applauded it, for you were doing your duty, and it delighted me to look upon myself as the affianced bride of such a great-hearted man.

“ Such was the condition of my mind when I went, last winter, to reside with my father, at the house of a friend near Oxford, who had often solicited us to visit him. Alas ! how little did I think of the deadly portion that was awaiting me—how little did I think that a serpent was lying hid beneath the rose’s leaves to sting me even unto the heart.

“ At the house of Sir William All-fox-den we met your brother Frederick ; he greeted us as old acquaintance—was delighted to see us, and inquired after his uncle, but he said not a word concerning you, and appeared altogether ignorant of what had transpired between us. He repeated his visit, and we, of course, welcomed him with a degree of cordiality which he was entitled to as being your brother : as for myself, I spoke kindly and unreservedly to him ; at his request I sang to him, and he talked to me of Italy—he said, that he had dwelt at Naples many months, and he expa-

tiated in eloquent language upon the picturesque beauties of my birth-place. The account of his visit to Italy was an entire forgery throughout; I see the smile of derision which curls your lip; it was a wily fabrication; all Frederick's knowledge of Italy was gained through the medium of books.

“ But I absolutely disliked Frederick on his own account; I could not think kindly of him; I was courteous and attentive to him because he was *your brother*; I disliked him because he appeared not to regard you with the smallest degree of fraternal affection; I had no difficulty in perceiving that your brother had a bad heart.

“ One day, when I was sitting alone, my father entered the room—his countenance was distorted with anger—his eyes glared with an expression of most uncontrollable fury—his hands were clenched, and there was moisture on his brow. I saw, at once, that he was violently agitated, and when my father's passion is at its height, it is terrible to be within the pale of its influence. ‘ Margaret,’ he said, choking with choler, ‘ when did you write last to Mr. Claude Jerningham?’ I trembled all over, I knew not the import of this question, uttered as it was, with a vehemence of gesture and articulation which appalled me, but I answered, ‘ Father, I am writing to him *now*.’ — ‘ Ha!’

he said, and his extreme passion almost stifled the tones of his voice, ‘then write not another line, but burn what you have written this instant,—not a word, Margaret, obey me,’ and he stamped violently. ‘That is well, and hark you, my daughter, have you any letters of his? Answer me,—you have, very well, let me see them all burnt before my face—all, every line that he has written to you; if you retain the smallest scrap of paper soiled with the handwriting of that villain, you are no longer my daughter. I will discard you, I will cast you from me!’ I heard no more—the blood curdled in my veins—I screamed, and sinking to the earth, I became even as a corpse. Darkness was before mine eyes, and consciousness had utterly deserted me.

“I never shall forget what I endured when first the light of knowledge began to dawn upon my shrouded reason. I have read of men who, having been buried alive, have awakened from a long trance to find themselves in the darksome charnel-house; but the agonies of these men could not have exceeded mine, when, awaking from this fearful swoon, I found myself in a moral charnel-house,—my fondest hopes lying dead around me, and the darkness of utter desolation obscuring my tortured soul. But as yet I knew not the full extent of the evil that had come upon me; the dreadful words of

my father, like death-knells, were ringing in my ears. ‘Discard, or be yourself discarded; cast out the image of thy lover from thy thoughts, or the curse of disobedience light upon thee henceforth and for ever!’

“By slow degrees, my father unfolded the dreadful story of your treachery and wickedness. Frederick had done his work with all the subtlety of a practised deceiver,—the covert hint, the sly inuendo, the well-concealed bait, cast by the skilful angler into the waters,—the meaning look, the significant shrug, the smile of sorrowful incredulity,—all the thousand wily artifices which malignity invents to awaken suspicion, were practised by this cunning Iago. A look was followed by an insinuation,—an insinuation, in process of time, became a distinctive charge; but every accusation against you was *extorted*, ay, wrung from your brother. It was all so admirably contrived, that the unwillingness, which Frederick manifested to make known your delinquencies, might impress my deluded father with a full certainty of the truth of all he heard.

“I have already acquainted you with the nature of the calumnies which Frederick heaped upon you. My father was almost delirious with rage; he declared that you had taxed him with cowardice, and vowed terrible vengeance against you, swear-

ing that he would seek you out though you were in the uttermost corner of the world, and prove his courage and your own, face to face, until death divided you. But Frederick's subtlety withheld my father,—plausible reasons were adduced;—the choler of my angry sire was gradually appeased by the arts of your brother; for plainly did that cunning intellect behold, in the threatened measures of my father, the detection of all those glossy falsehoods which his satanic soul had plotted for the undoing of his victims. If my father had not listened to his adviser, what a world of misery we should have been spared! You would have confronted him, and, indignantly rebutting the malicious accusations of your accuser, have challenged the man who had maligned you, to verify his black aspersions. You would have been triumphant, and eternal infamy would have tracked the footsteps of your calumniator,—his villanies exposed,—his lies detected,—shame would have been upon him for ever. But your brother foresaw all this; and his ubiquitous cunning was triumphant.

“I must tell you, Claude, that the unequal distribution of your father's property, after his death, was a circumstance which very materially contributed to the success of Frederick's machinations. That unjust will, which allotted to you a pitiful legacy of a few thousand pounds, whilst your

brother became the heir to property of a considerable amount, was brought up in judgment against you: it was said that you had offended your father,—that your extreme irregularities whilst in India, nay, indeed, the gross profligacy, and the utter unworthiness of your Calcutta career, had so excited the indignation of your parents, that they had cast you out of their affections for ever, ere death came to render your re-union, upon this side of eternity, impossible. Oh! with what subtlety did he deduce (ensconcing himself beneath the shelter of this one incontrovertible fact) a thousand proofs of your reckless immorality. And all with such apparent reluctance,—such modesty! he was a master-craftsman!”

“And you believed all this?” I exclaimed. “Oh, Margaret! Margaret!” And I groaned aloud;—the greatness of my affliction had wrung this reproach from my lips. I did not voluntarily utter these words, for they were unkind, and smote, with a crushing weight, upon the heart of my agonized companion. Ever and anon, we think aloud;—from the fulness of the heart cometh words which we would fain, but which we cannot, control.

“No, Claude, I did not believe him. But let me be brief, for I have already protracted the term of your sufferings and of mine. I did not believe him for many weeks, but my father did, for it is

his nature to be impetuous ; and it was with the utmost difficulty that I persuaded him to write to your uncle. He did write at length, to inquire from this excellent man the characters of *both* his nephews : but no answer ever came. My heart sickened within me,—I abandoned myself to the hopelessness of my sorrow,—I went about ‘like a corpse alive.’ Frederick was the bearer of that letter.

“ It was never sent : my father inconsiderately trusted it into the hands of your brother. ‘ I forget,’ said Frederick, ‘ at this precise moment, my uncle’s address, for he is sojourning in the country, at the house of a friend, whom I know not ; but I will take the letter to the university and enclose it for you, as, by referring to my memoranda, I shall be able immediately to ascertain Mr. Jerningham’s required direction.’

“ In the mean time, I exhorted my father to write to you, but this request he perseveringly refused to grant, and destroyed every letter that you addressed to me, heaping upon you all the most indignant expressions that his inflamed imagination suggested, whilst at the same time he lauded your brother, and declared that Frederick was as excellent as you were base and degraded, adding that, ‘ Such was the young man, whom he should be proud of owning as his son-in-law.’ I shud-

dered, and in a trembling voice asked my father whether he was quite certain of Frederick's integrity and virtue. 'Positively certain,' replied my father, energetically, 'Mr. —— is his tutor, and Dr. —— the principal of his college. I have been inquiring into the character of the young man, and I learn, that not only is he the most talented man of his year, but one of the most moral and excellent youths in the whole university of Oxford; you know, my love, that we are going next week to spend some time with Dr. ——; we shall then have ample opportunities of ascertaining the truth of these statements.'

"We went to Oxford, and we saw Frederick often; but I always felt constrained in his society, though my father resolutely maintained that I ought to regard him in the light of a sincere friend, who had fortunately rescued me from the gulf of perdition which I was hurrying into, ere he came to my assistance, and redeemed me. I knew not what to think of all this: I was bewildered; I was as one spell-bound. I do not think that my reason has been what it was, since that dreadful day, when the mighty pillar of my towering hopes was levelled with the ground by a thunderbolt from Heaven, and I left, weeping, among the ruins. Oh! Claude, I have arrived at that dread period in this history of my degradation, which — but I

will quell the throbbings of my brain, and stifle the palpitations of my heart. Do not the coolness of my demeanour, my bland aspect, my measured tones, and the staid propriety of my diction, disgust you? Does it not freeze your blood, to hear this heartless narration recited in sober language, and apparently without emotion? Do you not marvel at my self-possession?—alas! it is a violence against my nature,—this serene brow and these decorous tones, are but the antic gestures of the player. It is necessary that I should control my emotions; if I were to give vent to them at this moment, I should be *writhing at your feet!*

“Look at me,—look upon my altered countenance; it is calm, but it is not that which it was. Where is the bloom of health; where is the bright-eyed look of joy? Gone for ever! Can you look upon me, Claude, without feeling that I have suffered intensely? ‘The wickedness of a woman changeth her face,’* saith the scripture; alas! how am I changed!

“Your brother courted me: he employed all those wiles which usually fascinate women.—The low soft voice, the artful compliment, the impressive language, the animated look,—all were at

* Ecclesiasticus, xxv. 17.

Frederick's command. He spake of Italy, and in the language of the country; he was well acquainted with Italian literature, and professed a warm admiration of every thing connected with my birth-place. He said, that he had it in contemplation to purchase an estate near Naples.—What subtlety there was in all this! My father, who, like most hasty men, is easily imposed upon by appearances, was enraptured, when he heard your brother discoursing so eloquently of our father-land. 'Margaret,' he said, 'this is the man who ought to be your husband.'

"Claude, my nature partakes largely of my father's extreme impetuosity. I am the creature of impulse; I am always in excesses. I know not what it is to be calm. Do not think that I seek to exculpate myself; I am no sophist, I have erred grossly; the violence of my passions has led me astray. They told me that it was your design to ruin me—they told me that your love was unholy—that you were a wily profligate and had been endeavouring to debauch me. My father told me this; your brother hinted at this, and the silence of your uncle seemed to confirm the truth of those black insinuations which I was so unwilling to believe. What could I do, Claude, hemmed in on every side as I was? Do you marvel that my weak intellect should have betrayed me; and that

my confidence in your integrity and honour should at length have been shaken to the base? Is it strange that the constant maledictions which my father heaped upon your head and the covert suggestions of your brother, whose character at the university was unexceptionable, at least amongst the dignitaries of his college, should at length have tainted my soul with the impurity of foul suspicion? So it was, Claude, that I fell into the pit—I believed in your transgressions, and I hated you.

“ I hated you—no, no ; hatred was not the feeling. Yet I scarcely can tell you what I felt—it was scorn, indignation, and an inordinate craving for revenge ; but it was not hatred, for the substratum of it all was love. I am an Italian—the warm blood of the south circulates in my distended veins. The women of Italy can use the stiletto, when headstrong passion guides their delicate hands, and a sense of injury, which is most strong in the most gentle, converts the softness of the young maiden into the fierce energy of the exasperated hyæna ! Besides, I was jealous, Claude ; they told me that you were courting another ; they said, with an emphasis which I could not mistake, ‘ He is wooing Miss Hervey to be his *wife*. ’ Alas ! Claude, human nature is weak, and weakest of all in an offended woman.

“My indignation against you was unbounded—I said to myself ‘I will become the wife of another. I will trample upon the protestations of this designing profligate. I will place myself high above him, on an eminence which the venom of his serpent-tongue cannot reach; I will become a virtuous woman. The snake crawls at the foot of the mountain; and his malice is impotent against those who look down upon him from the apex. The meanest thing in the creation is the corrupt heart of a selfish profligate—the most exalted is the unshaken honesty of a virtuous and faithful wife. I will raise myself above him, and he shall be ashamed to look upon me,’—and with these thoughts in my mind I listened to the solicitations of your brother.

“I admired Frederick, but I did not love him. It was impossible that I should have loved a second time. My heart was widowed—my hopes were dead—affection had gone from me for ever; but I respected him, I was told that he was virtuous, and I knew him to be highly-gifted.”

“He is very beautiful,” I said, in accents rather exculpatory than reproachful. I thought, with a painful feeling, of my great inferiority in this respect. It was unworthy of me, but so it was, that I thought of my homeliness and sighed.

But Margaret thought not as I did—“Beauti-

ful!—talk not of his beauty. I have known his countenance at times to be so hideous that I have feared to look upon it. I have seen it, when distorted by passion, rife with a fiendish expression, which has appalled me; I have quailed beneath his glance. The consummate hideousness of Mokannah was as an angel's beauty beside that of my husband when he scowled. There was a moral deformity in his aspect—oh! God, how it has terrified me ere now. There is no beauty, believe me, where there is an evil heart.

“I need not dwell upon this period of courtship. We were residing at Oxford with Dr. —, and Frederick came often to see us. Every tongue was loud in its celebration of your brother's extraordinary genius; he was indisputably the first scholar in the university, and when the long-expected day of trial came on, he proved himself superior to all competitors—there were none to rival Frederick Jerningham. On the evening of the day on which his extraordinary success was made known to him, he came laden with honours to visit my father and myself. He was in unusually high spirits: he was no longer the quiet, sanctified, gentle, and devout suitor, with his low voice and his subdued demeanour; but an animated, joyous, free-spirited wooer, proud of the golden opinions which he had gained for himself by his industry

and genius, exulting in his conscious superiority — young, rich, beautiful, and highly gifted; every eye was turned upon him, every tongue praised him, and in the moment of his triumph he sat beside me; he whispered soft words in my ear; he urged his suit with an unwonted degree of fervour; he was very eloquent; I suspect that he was exhilarated by the juice of the vine—but he was humble, courteous, and affectionate; he spake as a lover speaketh, he pressed me to become his wife, and I—I—I consented.

“ Did I consent because I loved him? No—I consented because you had wronged me, or rather because I thought that you had wronged me—alas! I was grievously mistaken.

“ You are already sufficiently acquainted with my history to know that my father was under a solemn obligation to remain in England until my marriage might absolve him of the parental tie which forced him to become an exile from his own father-land. Situated as Mr. de Laurier was, is it strange that he should have ardently desired to see his daughter respectably settled as the wife of a good man? My father had nothing in his nature which harmonized with England and the English; he is most entirely an Italian. It was the severest penalty ever inflicted upon a man, which drove him an exile from his own country;

but he yielded ; he had an oath in heaven, and scrupulously did he observe that oath. But he sighed for the home of his fathers ; he was never happy in England ; there was no joy for him but in his own beloved Italy. I do not blame him, therefore, for desiring to see me wedded ; he believed sincerely that he was advancing my happiness in pressing this union upon me. Frederick was young, rich, highly-gifted, and, as my father thought, virtuous. What more could woman desire ?

“ We were married, Claude,—your brother and I became man and wife. I had always fully believed in the sincerity of Frederick’s attachment. I doubted not the truth of his protestations,—I suspected not the genuineness of his looks. But he had never loved me,—never with his heart. He was heartless ; he cared not for my happiness ; he loved me as the libertine loveth, and, after marriage, he hated me exceedingly, as Amnon hated his sister, ‘so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her.’ I will not tell you all that he hath done. I will not speak of my days of sorrow, my nights of anguish, my exceeding wretchedness. I have been insulted, abused, tormented,—I am the victim, not the wife, of your brother. Perhaps I deserve all this, but not from him, not from my

husband. In the hour of my happiness I neglected my God, and perhaps he has stricken me now, that my heart might be turned towards him. You remember what the pages of the poet were to me, when I was innocent and happy,—such now is the Bible, Claude. Yet my husband also reads the Bible,—but how? to deceive others, and to ruin his own soul. It is his scourge,—the instrument of his villany,—the weapon wherewith every day he committeth moral suicide. Oh God! that such dread profanation of thy word ever should be!”

She ceased; her narration was ended; she had confessed her delinquencies, but not unburthened her heart; there was a weight of sorrow heavily pressing there, which she was unwilling to communicate unto me. She would not speak of her own sufferings, though, alas! they were very great. She was silent; she did not weep; she had already wept plentiful tears, and the fountain was now dried up.

“And your husband is now—”

“At Oxford,” interrupted Margaret,—“at least, he is professedly there; he told me that he was going there about a degree,—but, alas! he has deceived me so often—”

“And assuredly he has deceived you now, Margaret, for this is the long vacation time, and he

can have no business at Oxford ; but think not of these things : he is unworthy of you. Hope, Margaret, hope !”—and my heart sickened within me, for I thought that there was *no* hope.

* * * *

“Then you remain not here very long ?” said Margaret. “I would not that Frederick and you should meet, for the whole world.”

“Fear not, Margaret ; he is safe,” I replied, “though he is no longer my brother, he is still your husband, and is protected. But it is better, —much better, Margaret, that you and I should not dwell together.”

“It is,”—and Margaret’s face was full of tenderness as she spoke. “It is, Claude, but,”—and she checked herself ; a momentary blush overspread the delicate pallor of her cheeks, and she continued in a new strain evasively, for there were feelings in her breast not to be made manifest by words,—“but whilst we do dwell together we must veil our emotions, Claude. We must wear the mask and the domino, and be as others are. We must not betray our feelings to the eyes of an insensate community.”

“You are right, Margaret, we *are* brother and sister, let us *be*, not merely *appear*, as relatives always are wont to do. Let us be friends, though

we cannot"—I paused, for Margaret was trembling all over.

"I am a skilful actor, Margaret," I continued; "you saw me last night. Did you think that I was really joyous; did you think that the glad-some voice,—the animated look,—and the lively gesture, were really the spontaneous effusions of a gay and tranquil heart? Or did you think ——"

"I thought not at all, Claude. I *knew* that you were acting a part."

"But others did not,—how little did they think, that whilst I was laughing and jesting, an insatiable fire was burning around my heart, and that all my sportive buffoonery was nothing but the mask of my desolation,—a chaplet of flowers upon a death's head,—a wrought garment enveloping grave-worms."

"Oh! do not speak thus, I beseech you," cried Margaret. "Is this veiling your emotions? Oh! Claude, be as I am—*calm*. Have I not in a low, measured voice spoken of my huge desolation? Have I not in the common language of common men embodied the most agonizing confessions ever wrung from a bleeding heart? Be tranquil; and why shouldest thou not be so? Rend out the past from thy memory; forget me and be—*happy*."

"Talk not of happiness to me, Margaret. Speak

not of sun-light to the blind man. It is impossible. I have nothing more to do but"—

"You are married, Claude!" interrupted my brother's wife. "You are married; and where love is, there, also, is happiness."

"Then let us be happy, Margaret. I have never loved any other than you!"

"Never!—oh, bliss!" And she looked fondly upon me.

I extended my arms, and she threw herself upon my bosom. I clasped her: she sobbed violently. I bent down my head and kissed her. We stood upon the brink of a precipice!

But we fell not! An angel-hand restrained us; an angel voice cried out unto us; and we hearkened to the warning.—We went forth from the pavilion pure as we entered in.

CHAPTER VI.

'Tis a tyranny
Over an humble and obedient sweetness,
Ungently to insult.

FORD'S Lady's Trial.

Stars fall but in the grossness of our sight,
A good man dying, earth doth lose a light.

FORD'S Broken Heart.

"WELL, Ellen, what news?" said I, as my wife helped me to unburthen myself of my ponderous great-coat.

"Alas! Claude," replied my wife, "I am afraid, little that is good. Your uncle"——

"I have seen him, Ellen; he is very ill. I am going, to-morrow, to bring him down here, that you may nurse him. You are a gentle creature; would you like to nurse my sick uncle, Ellen?"

"Can you ask me such a question, my love?"

Oh ! I shall be so happy ; I will sit by him all the day long, and be to him even as a daughter."

" You are very kind, Ellen,"—and I kissed her delicate cheek,—“you are very kind indeed, to offer your services to my poor uncle. But, methinks that you yourself want nursing;—you are paler than when I last saw you."

" But I shall soon be better now, my love. The flowers always droop their heads when the sun shines not upon them, and the rain does not fall in due season."

" You are become a poetess, Ellen," I returned in a sarcastic voice ; " has Everard been instructing you, during my absence, in the art rhetorical, I pray ? By the bye, where is Mr. Sinclair ? is he in his room, do you know, Ellen ?"

" He has ridden out. As for the poetry, Claude, I know not exactly what you mean. You are not angry, are you, my love ? I will not talk such nonsense in future ; but people who love much are all, more or less, poets."

" True, Ellen, true," I replied kindly ; for the artless truth of my young wife soon curbed my incipient peevishness. " Have you any more news to tell me ? I have been absent nearly a week."

" Yes, my love, I have other news to tell you. My dear father has been appointed to the living of * * * in ——shire."

“Through whose agency?” I asked, though I well knew what would be the answer.

“Through your uncle’s or, rather, through yours, love. The living, you well know, is in the gift of the Lord Chancellor, and papa only heard of the appointment this morning. He will be here directly; I am sure that he will, for I have sent a servant to the rectory, to apprise him of your long-wished-for return.”

To speak candidly, this was an excellent piece of news. I had already begun to experience the irksomeness of “marrying a family.” One seldom has much partiality for the parents and sisters of one’s wife.

I heard the sound of horses’ hoofs before the house, and presently Everard Sinclair entered the room and saluted me. The flush of exercise was upon his cheeks; his step was quick and elastic; his manner was unusually animated: his whole appearance was that of a man who has been doing a good work. There was nothing consequential or vain-glorious in his look; but he was invested with a noble air of conscious integrity, such as well might have become a saint, or an angel, in the fulfilment of its duty.

“Well, Everard,” I said, “what have you been doing? A generous action, I could almost swear. How very becoming generosity is; I mean per-

sonally, Everard; you have no idea how handsome you look. Oh! what would an artist not give to catch the tint that is now upon your cheek."

Everard smiled; he scarcely knew whether my words were words of sarcasm or the undisguised admiration of an open and sincere heart. And in truth I hardly knew, myself — at all events they were words of truth: for Everard was actually beautiful.

"Indeed, Claude," he replied with an unaffected modesty, "I have been doing nothing that is at all worthy the name of a generous action. But let me know whether Leicester is in London, and whether he will attend the funeral to-morrow?"

"Yes, Everard," I replied, "our eccentric friend is at Ibbotson's. We travelled up together in my stanhope, and his lordship horsed it half the way. Despite his vagaries and his singularities (to give them no harsher name) he has a well of very deep feeling beneath all his apparent levity, the waters of which are pure, though the superstructure which is reared upon it, is defiled and overgrown with weeds. He was very much affected, Everard, when I told him of Delaval's death, and I think that it will be some time ere his spirits will be able to recover their natural, joyous tone. He desires to be chief mourner, and he has every right to be such, for he is the heir of

the dead man. You have made all the necessary arrangements of course for the funeral to-morrow?"

"I believe that I have done every thing," replied Everard. "I was in London this morning, and saw your uncle; he was very impatient for your return, and has been suffering very severely. He has never recovered entirely from the effects of that severe cold, which he caught at the * * * election. Have you seen him? He endures pain with the patience and fortitude of a martyr."

"Yes, Everard, I have seen him—we must bring him to Heathfield that we may nurse him—you, Ellen and myself. And now tell me, what have you been doing. Whence cometh that flush upon your cheek? Exercise has not done it all—you have been doing a good work."

"So you will not allow me the consolation of thinking that health has done this. Do you know old Jonas Martin, who lives by the turnpike at H——? He has a son, who has gone astray, and has been sent to the debtors' prison at * * *. Old Jonas was in sore distress, when I called upon him this morning. A broker was in the cottage, and the old man, when I entered, was selling his little furniture, to redeem his profligate son. But," and here Everard paused, for he liked not to speak of his good works. "I sent the broker away, and rode over to * * *. That is

all: I hope that by this time young Martin is beneath the roof of his father."

My uncle came to live amongst us — to dwell "with his own people" — to be nursed and tended by the officious zeal of ever-watchful affection. There were three hearts which vied with one another in the race of gratitude and love,—there were three voices lifted up in prayer, night and morning, for the safety of my uncle. But "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends," and sleepless solicitude, though they mitigate the agonies of the sick chamber, delay not the progress of disease; and Matthew Jerningham's great heart was about soon to be still for ever.

In the meantime I remained at Heathfield. I seldom even visited the metropolis. Parliament was not sitting at this time, and I had no other avocations in London which could induce me to quit the side of my uncle. Many vices have devastated my soul, but ingratitude was not one of them.

"I speak as a fool." I was a shameless ingrate. I was cursed with a thankless heart. I had a wife — the most gentle, the most affectionate, the most angelic creature in the world — yet I loved her not. "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband," saith Solomon. Yet I trampled upon the jewels of my crown; I stained its lustre; I

threw it aside ; I neglected it, and it was broken into pieces.

I have more than once, in the course of my narrative, presumed to speak of myself as possessing a kind heart. How inconsistent is human nature ! A tale of sorrow — of distress, or more than all, of generosity, filled me with the tenderest emotion, and brought the moisture to glisten in my eyes. I was charitable, my pity was easily excited, and on the whole I was but moderately selfish. My behaviour towards Everard Sinclair was to the last degree noble and chivalrous — my conduct towards my uncle was such as left nothing to be desired. But to my wife I was a brute — a demon — a monster of cruellest ingratitude.

I had been piqued into marrying Ellen. I had united myself to her not because I loved her, but because she who was the idol of my soul—the light of my world—the pillar of my hopes—had deserted me, and become the wife of another. Yet I had always from my childhood upwards regarded Ellen with a placid affection—a gentle, brotherly love, which had never amounted to a passion ; but which, in my calmer moods, often took possession of my soul, and came upon me fraught with feelings of hallowed purity and bliss. I loved her as an elder brother doats upon his fa-

vorite sister. It scarcely seemed possible to me that I should ever make her my wife; we appeared already to be united by ties which precluded altogether the possibility of any further alliance.

Yet so it was, that we became man and wife. In a moment of extreme exacerbation I had resolved to throw myself at her feet. With me to resolve was to do. I suffered no second thoughts, no after qualms, to turn me aside from that which I had once determined on. When the dreadful news of Margaret's faithlessness became known unto me, in the bitterness of my spirit, I cried out "I will marry another." I knew many women in the world possessed of those amiable qualities which render marriage a blessing, but it happened that Ellen Hervey was the only one, the state of whose affections I could calculate upon with any degree of certainty. Besides, it was natural that my thoughts should have involuntarily turned themselves unto her. I knew that she loved me, and I loved her in return,—but not as a bridegroom loveth. Some may think that such an union as this was likely to be productive of much happiness; there was a quiet serenity in my affection for Ellen which exhibited more symptoms of lastingness than does a passion of a more violent nature; but it was not so, for Ellen Hervey only held the second place in my heart.

Yet, I believed that I should be able to fulfil all the duties of an affectionate husband. If any one had hinted before marriage that I was likely ever to be unkind to my wife, I should undoubtedly, in the sincerity of my heart, have rebuked the insinuator of such a calumny with all the indignation of offended innocence. But it fell out that we had not long been married, before the wickedness of my disposition became manifest. The injuries which I had suffered, rankled in my heart, and the venom which they diffused through my veins, vented itself in unkind words, which fell crushingly upon my poor wife. I struggled, with all my might to divest myself of these evil propensities. I said to myself, a thousand times, "Jerningham, this conduct is unworthy of you; your behaviour is that of a brute;" but my self-upbraidings, vehement as they were, wrought no amelioration upon my morality. I was depraved; the canker of guilt had wormed itself deeply into my constitution. I could not help myself; I used my utmost endeavours to love Ellen, but I could not. I was by nature no hypocrite. I could wear the mask for a season, but I could not be always acting a part. I could not dwell, day after day, beneath the same roof with another, and support a fraudulent character for a series of months together. It was laborious enough to be the hypocrite

of a day ; but to live a life of deception was impossible. I could not smile, and kiss, and wear a face of affection when feelings of aversion and disgust were paramount in my evil soul. It is the nature of love to be erratic ; I, at least, could not control its wanderings. Affection must be spontaneous or not all. “ It is an invisible hand from Heaven that ties this knot, and mingles hearts and souls by strange, secret, and unaccountable conjunctions.”•

The entire faultlessness of my wife exasperated me against her all the more. If I had detected in Ellen’s conduct any real cause for complaint, it would have appeased, rather than inflamed, the constant irascibility which fed upon me. But there was actually nothing to reprehend ; she was the very perfection of a wife ; the most censorious eye could not have discerned a blemish in Ellen’s spotless behaviour. All those endearing qualities, which render a woman amiable in the sight of her husband, adorned both her person and her mind. She was young, beautiful, loving, and compliant. She idolized me ; she would have been well content to have been the humblest of my slaves ; she lived only for me ; her feelings were as the shadows of my feelings ; she knew neither joys nor sorrows but such as were the reflections of mine. But I

loved her not for all this: her undying affection nauseated me; her yielding gentleness disgusted me; that very feminine softness, which is the crown of a fair woman, and which my reason could not but commend, made me almost sick with aversion. But I had *no* reason; my intellect had gone from me; I grovelled in abject darkness. I was the most degraded amongst men. The wretch who tramples upon the pliant nature of a weak and unoffending woman, is lost; there is no hope for him. God and man have alike discarded him.

I was to the last degree selfish and exacting. I was not even consistent in my tyranny. I would issue an order one day, and abuse my wife on the next for having obeyed me. One time she was too silent; another time she was too loquacious; yesterday she was absurdly affectionate, to-day cold and distant; I was sure that she did not love me. It was impossible, let her do what she would, to give me the smallest satisfaction.

“My dearest Claude,” she would say, her large blue eyes brimful of eloquent tears, “only tell me what you desire that I should do, and it shall be done; but do not upbraid me for fulfilling your own behests.” And then she would look meekly and imploringly into my face, and laying her hand affectionately upon my shoulder, supplicate me to forgive her—and for what?—for being only too

good a wife, for being an angel, when I was a monster.

I was not so wholly depraved but that I often bitterly repented of my unkind behaviour towards Ellen. I upbraided myself, time after time; I promised to amend, but I did not. I was a brute; if there was one circumstance wanting to set the crown upon my utter unworthiness, it was this, that my poor wife was about to become a mother, and that, despite her interesting situation, I obstinately persevered in insulting her.

I asked myself more than once, "Is there any real cause for the restless exacerbation of my spirit? What has Ellen done, or what is she, that I should trample upon her in this wise?" I tasked my ingenuity to its utmost stretch, and all that I could elicit was this—"Her intellect is not sufficiently elevated to sympathize with my loftier emotions; and she renders the gulf between Margaret and myself more impassable than it would be were I unmarried." I remembered too that Margaret had said, "They told me that you were wooing Miss Hervey to be your wife, and then I began to hate you." But poor Ellen! what had she to do with this? She was as innocent as the little lamb in the fable, whom the wolf fell upon for disturbing the waters.

Ellen's health gave way beneath my unkind-

ness. She was like a delicate flower exposed to the rough winds of the north. Besides, she was my uncle's nurse, she sat by his bedside all the day; and the day was never too long for her. The sick-chamber was her sanctuary; she knew that she was safe there; she was happy when she was doing good; she thought too that her kindness to my uncle might make me more kind to herself. But it did not; she tried to smile, though the canker-worm was eating into her heart.

My uncle saw nothing of this; but Everard Sinclair saw it, and he reproached me. I was a coward. I was afraid of Everard; I could not bear his reproaches. He was so mild, so gentle, yet so impressive; there was so much truth and so much pathos in what he said, that I trembled like a child when he reprimanded me. He fixed his large, soft eyes reproachfully upon me, and in a calm decisive voice proceeded to comment upon my behaviour—to point out the unreasonableness of my conduct, and to intreat me to amend my ways. I listened to him; I always listened to him. I had never done otherwise all my life, than acknowledge his great superiority. I had been accustomed from my very boyhood to regard him, upon all points of morality, as my oracle; I revered his counsels; I looked upon myself as his pupil. He was so much wiser and better than

myself, that I never set up my opinions against his. I should as soon have thought of disputing with a prophet or an angel from heaven.

But although I always listened to his advice, I am afraid that I did not always follow it. My heart acknowledged that he was right, but my actions often belied the acknowledgment.

Everard, not I, ought to have been the husband of Ellen. How happily they might have lived together. They were made for each other; they were both so gentle, so good, so affectionate, so self-denying. I often thought of this; I often compared them with each other. I dare say that Ellen often thought, "Everard would not have treated me thus."

Will it be credited, that I became jealous of Everard? I verily believe that I was a monomaniac. I was smitten with a moral insanity. Everything connected with my wife, I saw through a distorted medium. I had no reason in the world for thinking that my wife loved Everard, excepting that she loved me, and Everard was more worthy of being beloved. What a reason! Everard was possessed of beauty, genius, and virtue. It was clear, therefore, that Ellen loved him. She could not do otherwise than love him. Every good person loved Mr. Sinclair; she was not good if she did not love him; she ought to love him, and she did.

But my kindness towards Everard Sinclair abated not one jot. He lived with me; he "ate bread in my presence continually." He was not dependent upon me; he had money of his own; his brother had made him a provision. But still he clave to me; it was my desire that he should do so; sometimes he spent a month at Cloddington, but his home was beneath my roof.

I did not think that Everard loved my wife, I only thought that my wife loved Everard. I could not suspect my friend for a moment; I looked upon our connexion as too sacred a thing. To have suspected Everard's morality, would have been like suspecting the truth of a divine creed I had cherished all my life. It would have filled my soul with desolation. Besides, I knew better. I was only irrational when I thought of my wife: I scanned the actions of other people correctly.

It was a beautiful thing to see Everard Sinclair fondling his little child. How entirely did he love the infant,—my little god-daughter, — *ma petite Claudine*. I was almost as fond of the child as was its father. I had plenty of love for every body but my poor wife.

What a sweet thing is a little child! "He is nature's fresh picture newly drawn in oil, which time and much handling dims and defaces. His

soul is yet a white paper unscribbled with observations of the world, wherewith, at length, it becomes a blurred note-book.”* I quote another, but I could say much for myself. I could write for hours upon such a subject as this. He who has never been a father, knows, as it were, nothing. He has come into the world to no purpose. He has gone to the banquet and not tasted the wine. He has entered the garden of life without inhaling the perfume of the flowers. He has cracked the shell and thrown away the kernel. He has made the voyage; he has slain the dragon; he has sown the teeth; he has smitten the armed men,—but though he has done all this, he has not carried off the golden fleece at last. We always love that which is our own. Whether it be our horse, our dog, the book which we have written, the picture which we have painted, the tree which we have planted; we always love that which is our own, even to our own—*selves*. But a child,—a thing that moves, and breathes, and smiles and prattles, and looks so innocent, and loves us whether we be good or evil,—how can we do otherwise than doat upon it? It is so entirely our own, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, created in God’s own image, a thing which we once were our-

* Earle’s *Microcosmographie*.

selves, and which, if it had not been for us, would never have had its being. There is something in sinless humanity which it is quite beautiful to contemplate; it suggests to us what we might have been, if Eve had not tasted the apple. It suggested this to the Messiah :—"Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

But when the child grows into the man, it is altogether a different thing; when the being which we have given life to begins to set up its pretensions against our own; to argue with us, to contradict us, to upbraid us, to consider our merit and to canvas our actions,—to ask itself, "How far does it behove me to take counsel of this man?"—when all this comes to pass, we grow disgusted; we wish that we had never begotten children. We see ourselves, as in a mirror, making mouths at us,—our own deformities, our own frailties, our own vices, our own infirmities of temper,—they are renewed in our children to reproach us. We are disappointed, we are sure to be disappointed: what parent is there that does not expect his child to turn out either a beauty or a genius? The greater the promise, the greater the disappointment. A pretty child, in most cases, grows into a plain adult; a precocious one into a dullard; a petted one into an ingrate. When the

morning is very fine, it generally rains before night-fall. But I have nothing to do with all this.

A young mother nursing a baby is always a beautiful sight ; but a young father fondling his child is perhaps still more pleasant to look upon. It is less common ; in most cases a woman has nothing better to do ; but a man unbends when he turns nurse ; he casts off the sternness of his nature ; he forgets the world and its conventionalities — the becks of ambition, the turmoil of business, the derision of the community ; he forgets every thing, except that he is a father. When Hector takes Astyanax into his arms, we lose sight of Andromache who is standing by.

It was pleasant to see Everard Sinclair nursing the little Claudine. He would become almost childish himself. He would laugh ; it was not often that he laughed, for the sun-light of his joy was overshadowed ; but the prattle of the darling infant awakened his long-slumbering mirth. The meaning gestures, the ill-defined sounds which are not altogether inexpressive, though they cannot be called words, the obstreperous hilarity, the bubbling joy, the illuminated face of the little girl, who knew not as yet that she was motherless, all filled the stricken father with delight. How pleasant it was to see him teaching the young

cherub to walk, its tiny little pink feet slipping along the polished surface of the table, as a school-boy does along the ice, when he is not much accustomed to sliding. I loved the child as though it were my own. I was never tired of beholding its antics. The look of rapturous astonishment which the little ignorant thing would put on, when Everard held a watch to its ear, or a mirror before its eyes, delighted me. It was something so unlike any thing I had seen for years.

Ellen likewise doated upon the infant, and I hated her cordially for doing so. It was the love she bore to the child, which first made me think that she loved the father. And she did love him, but it was a hallowed love, such as an angel might have cherished without sinning.

I must return to my wife. As the winter came on, she exhibited evident symptoms of ill health. She had always been delicate—the large blue eye, the transparent skin, the fragile form, the long eyelashes, the conspicuous veins, the placid expression of her countenance, serenely beautiful as they rendered her, were indicative of a predisposition to phthisis. She was consumptive. It was apparent that she was the victim of a latent tuberculous disease. My unkindness towards her very much aggravated many of these symptoms; her countenance assumed a waxen look; her frame became

more attenuated ; her blue veins protruded themselves more conspicuously — I was killing her slowly, but certainly.

I took no notice of these things ; but Everard Sinclair did. He had kindness and pity in his heart ; he had knowledge also ; but I was a brute : I had neither pity, kindness, nor knowledge. I did not know that I was killing my wife : but Everard was versed in these matters. He had studied physiology, he was well acquainted with the nature and symptoms of diseases.

He bade me look to my wife. I watched her. It would be impossible to describe the agonies which that watchfulness cost me. I saw it all ; I saw what I had done. A man who, in a fit of inebriation, has slain the dearest friend he possesses, and who wakes from a long intoxicated sleep, to find that he has made himself a murderer, could not feel more appalled than I felt. I was an undone man. I looked at my hands, and I thought that there was blood upon them.

I spake kindly to Ellen. She protested that she was quite well. She said that in her whole life she had never enjoyed a better state of health. I did not believe her. She had framed this untruth only to soothe my anxiety. She herself knew that she was dying, but she uttered not a single complaint.

I did not send for a physician immediately — I had many reasons for doing this, which it would be useless to enlarge upon here — but I purchased a popular treatise upon consumption, and studied it until I had become master of the subject. I compared the symptoms of Ellen's disease with those described in the book, and I was soon certified of the fact, that she was in the first stage of a consumption.

She was languid, she was little able to exert herself; though she did not complain, it was easy to see that the slightest bodily labour brought on a painful state of lassitude. She coughed a little, especially in the mornings and evenings; she breathed quickly, and sometimes with difficulty; the smallest current of air entering the room would make her shiver all over. She was subject to fits of chilliness, which were generally followed by fever. There was a hollowness in the tones of her voice. I could not misinterpret these symptoms.

As the winter approached, she became evidently worse. I requested the medical man, who attended my uncle, and who was one of our most eminent metropolitan practitioners, to inquire into the condition of my wife, and to extract from her, by guarded interrogatories, a confession of the real state of her physical sensations. I had been able to elicit nothing. The constant answer which I

received, was "No, my love : I am quite well. Do not be uneasy upon my account, for I assure you that my health is very good." Poor Ellen ! she had the patience of a saint, and the heavenly spirit of an angel.

Dr. — put his questions guardedly, but Ellen was not to be deceived. They were alone together in the room. Ellen burst into a flood of tears.

"Did my husband — did Mr. Jerningham — tell you to ask these questions ?" she exclaimed. "Oh ! Dr. —, I know all ; I know well enough that I am dying. I am consuming, wasting away ; I know it — but do not tell *him*, do not tell my husband, I beseech you," and she would have gone down upon her knees, but the physician gently withheld her.

"Do you think, Dr. —," she continued, inquiringly, "that I shall live to——" her voice faltered,—she cast down her eyes,—she could not go on. Dr. — knew what she meant ; she alluded to her approaching maternity.

The physician was a kind man. He spoke words of hope and comfort. When he went out, his patient was happier than she had been for many months.

As for myself, I was the most miserable creature that ever breathed the breath of vitality. What could I do ? I poured upon Ellen the full cup of

my affection ; but, alas ! it was too late. The poison had done its work, and the antidote was utterly powerless !

In the mean time, the flame of my uncle's life waxed dimmer and dimmer. His "brief taper" was about soon to be extinguished. The sand of his existence was nearly out.

He had over-exerted himself in his active endeavours to secure my election for * * *. He had caught a very severe cold, having stood for many hours in drenched clothes, upon the hustings, one very rainy day. He had neglected that cold ; inflammation had ensued, which now terminated to the lungs. His dissolution was rapidly approaching ; but he was a good man, and he was ready to die.

What a patient sufferer he was ! He was wrenched with the most acute pain ; but he bore it all with the endurance of a martyr ! It was wonderful to look upon his sublime fortitude,—it was beautiful to see the serenity of his resignation. So calm, so humble, and yet so full of hope. His last moments were as the tranquil evening of an unclouded summer's day.

As I sate by my uncle's bed-side, I thought of Delaval, and of what he had said. "It is one thing to die like a philosopher, another to die like a Christian !" How different were the last moments of these two men !

My uncle was desirous of seeing Frederick, ere death should come to sever them for ever. He spake to me on the subject, and asked whether I had forgiven my brother? I answered in the affirmative; but the words which I uttered found no echo in my heart.

My uncle, since Frederick's marriage, had never mentioned the name of my brother, in my presence, until now. He had abstained from touching upon this dreadful subject, well knowing that any allusion to my misfortune, would be productive of no benefit, whilst it could not fail to excite the most painful feelings in my breast. He thought that it was better to be silent, though he had reflected much upon the subject, and was sore distressed for my sake. What could he do to lessen my affliction? Nothing! unless money had the power to staunch the wounds of a bleeding heart! But what is all the gold that was ever dug out of the earth to one that carries a fire in his bosom?

But my uncle made me his heir. The nature of my father's will had determined him in doing this. Justice required that he should do so. He knew more about that will than I did.

But he was willing to forgive my brother; he desired not to withhold his blessing from the offender; he wished to see him. He had it in

contemplation to join the hands of his unbrotherly nephews.

“Claude,” said my uncle, “will you write to your brother. I am ‘going the way of all the earth,’ and, great as is his offence, I would see him; for it happens sometimes, that the words of a dying man sink into the ears, and find their way to the heart of him against whom they are directed.”

“I will write to him, my uncle,” I replied.

“Where is he?”

“He is not in England. I had forgotten this when I spoke. He has gone abroad, and I know not where he is. But I will write to his agent. He has been absent a month. I heard of his departure accidentally.”

“Has he been apprized of my illness?” asked the sick man; and his face was overspread with sadness.

“Yes, uncle; Sinclair wrote to him; and Frederick left England, I think, in the ensuing week.”

“Then it is plain that he does not wish to see me;” and my uncle brushed a tear from his eye.

My uncle died.—“His hoar head went down to the grave in peace.” His spirit passed away gently; and he died as the Christian dieth.

But with these things I have nought to do. I must not suffer my sacrilegious footsteps to invade

the death-chamber of the righteous ! There is a sanctity,—a divinity, I may say,—in the last moments of a good man, which it would ill become me lightly to touch upon, in a work of this profane nature. The flippant jests, and the stirring adventures, which make up this book, assort not with the last scene of a devout Christian's life.

Let me go to another for assistance. I know not what better I can do, than quote a few lines from old Isaac Walton*. “He died, as he had lived, like a saint, unspotted of the world, full of alms-deeds, full of humility, and all the examples of a virtuous life, which I cannot conclude better than with this borrowed observation.

‘ All must to their cold graves ;
But the religious actions of the just
Smell sweet in death, and blossom in the dust.’ ”

* See the *Life of George Herbert*.

CHAPTER VII.

Here's a dainty mad woman, mad as a March hare.

BEAUMONT *and* FLETCHER.

Never came reformation in a flood
In such a heady current scouring faults,
Nor ever hydra-headed wilfulness
So soon did lose his seat, and fall at once,
As in this man.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE winter passed slowly away: it was a dull, sombre, melancholy winter with our mourning party at Heathfield. Ellen, Everard, and myself, we were all stricken and sorrowful. Our house was hung with black,—there was a pall over the face of the universe.

As the spring advanced, Ellen's disease began to wear a more favourable aspect: it was not be-

cause the weather was milder, although this might in some degree have tended towards the amelioration of her condition, but it was that she was about to become a mother, and consumption is often masked, as it were, by pregnancy, and I knew it.

In April I became a father ; a son was born unto me ; I called him Everard. A strange feeling is that of paternity, when it is quite fresh upon us : from the hour that my son was born I became an altered man ; I had something to live for ; I had “ given a hostage to fortune ;” I looked upon my child and rejoiced.

And together with the love of the father came upon me the love of the husband. Torrent-like, in a full tide, it rushed upon my swelling soul. How I loved the mother of my child ! She, whom so lately I had regarded with feelings of sickening aversion, became dearer to me than life ; my heart expanded with affectionate emotion ; I looked into the face of my Ellen, and I thought her the most beautiful creature that had ever existed upon earth. The iron-hearted exacting tyrant became the most devoted husband : I was never tired of waiting upon Ellen,—I was never so happy as when I was doing something for her—the more menial the office, the more delighted I was to perform it. The Claude Jerningham of December and the Claude

Jerningham of March were two differently constituted individuals. I would willingly have laid down my life, if by so doing I could have brought the roses of health to blush upon the cheeks of my wife.

But all this was of no avail : the fatal arrow had gone forth ; the progress of my wife's disease, which pregnancy had apparently retarded, advanced rapidly after parturition ; it was like water which had been dammed up, or fire which had been smothered for a while ; it burst out with renewed vigour directly that the coercive matter which had hindered its increase was removed.

It was the month of May, and Ellen had quitted her chamber ; it was pleasant to see her cuddling her infant, but it was sad, for there was death written in livid characters upon her wax-like face.

I was sitting one day in my library, turning over some parliamentary papers, when I heard the smack of a post-boy's whip, and the rattling of carriage wheels in front of my house. I had scarcely time to form a conjecture as to the probable identity of my visitor, ere the door was thrown open, and a female rushed into the room.

She was apparelled entirely in white : her head was bare, and her long dark ringlets streamed wildly down her neck : they were uncinctured—they had burst from their confinement, and now in

strange disorder, hung down even lower than her waist, and stood out in dark relief from the folds of her snowy drapery. You would have taken her for a Mænad, in one of her wildest fits; Agave, when she was all besmeared with the life-blood of her victim son, looked not more frantic than this woman.

It was Margaret.

Her face was flushed—her eye-brows were drawn up—her eyes seemed bursting from their sockets, and glittered like live coals—her whole countenance wore a glowing appearance, which was quite terrible to look upon: her lower lip was thrust out; it was flecked with white foam; her eye-lids, swollen and inflamed with much weeping and little sleep, circumscribed her suffused orbs with an elliptical line of scarlet, from which her long black-lashes, matted with tears, stood prominently out; it would have wrung your heart to have seen her. Alas, poor Margaret!

She was raving mad.

She rushed into the room; the panic-struck servant who had opened the door to admit her, scarcely had the power to close it. “Claude, Claude, save me!” she cried, and in a moment she had thrown herself at my feet.

She held a book in her hand: it was a small

Bible—"Read! read!" she exclaimed, and her tones were harsh and guttural—"I would have done it—one moment sooner—ha! ha! ha!" and she laughed loud and long, a terrible hyæna-like laugh.

She was kneeling at my feet—her hair thrown back—her face upturned—her arms stretched out, and her eyes glaring—"Read!" she said, but the book was not open.

"Read!"—she actually shrieked; there was a frantic earnestness in her voice; I was appalled—I was like a pillar of ice—the blood in my veins was frozen—I did not move, for I could not.

She started up—"Ha! ha! ha! So you do not know what you are to read? Well, well, I will shew you," and she opened the book, for the leaf was turned down.

She pointed with her finger—"I tell you it is there—I would have done it—Ha! ha! I would have done it, but I was too late."

I took the volume into my hand—"Read!" said Margaret, but I could not: mine eyes saw nothing save a page which seemed quite black.

She continued to point with her finger.

If any one had seen us at that moment, he would have thought it was madness dictating to death.

I held the book open in my hand; I was seated;

Margaret stood behind me, and with one arm stretching over my shoulder, she pointed to the passage I was to read.

“ You will not read, stubborn boy ! I tell you that I was too late, or I would have done it !—Ha ! ha ! What a glorious consummation it would have been—glorious, glorious, thrice glorious !”

There was a mirror opposite—I lifted up my eyes—Margaret was making faces.

I rose up, and, with a gentle motion, I grasped Margaret’s wrist ; I tried to speak, but the words choked me ; she burst into a loud laugh, and, with an effort of strength that would have been miraculous in any but a mad woman, she disengaged herself from my grasp.

She bounded across the room like a tiger let loose from its cage ; I followed her, for, hanging over the chimney-piece was a large Burmese knife, and I saw her eyeing it wistfully, but she did not attempt to take it ; I again seized her by the arm with a gentle but firm pressure of constraint.

“ Mrs. Jerningham,” I said, in a loud and menacing voice, for I knew that it was the best thing to intimidate her ; “ Mrs. Jerningham, I insist upon it that you compose yourself,—sit down !” and she sate down.

She was frightened, and she trembled all over ;

she placed her elbows upon the table, by which she sate, and supporting her head between her clenched hands, she looked at me as I have seen a monkey look at its master, who has beaten it.

“ I will do anything you like,” she said, in a calm deprecating voice, “ only just read that passage—those two verses I have marked ; it will do you no harm, there is no sorcery in them.”

I picked up the book, for it had fallen to the ground ; it opened at the right place. The two following verses were underscored :—

“ And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me ; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle.

“ Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground ; for he was fast asleep, and weary. So he died.”

“ Read aloud,” cried Margaret. I obeyed her. She repeated the words after me, “ ‘ So he died.’ Ha, ha ! But he did not ;—would that he had ! Did you ever feel an unquenchable desire to commit murder, Claude ? Well, well ; it is over, now. But if he should come,—he, he,—you know whom I mean, well enough ;—if he should come, you will save me from him. Oh, my God ! ” and she clasped her forehead with both her hands, as though she were endeavouring with all her might to control its throbbing ;—“ Oh, my God ! if he

were to find me here, what,—but you will not betray me.” She looked beseechingly into my face. I shook my head, but I did not answer. I was thinking what it behoved me to do.

She mistook the import of my gesture. “Fie, Claude, fie!” she exclaimed. “You, who were always so kind to me;—and are you going to betray me with a kiss? Fie, Judas! but there is kindness in your face, and a tear;—why, Heaven help you, I thought that men never wept!”

Then she ceased; and fell a-weeping piteously. It was altogether a heart-rending sight. What could I do? My boasted self-possession had almost entirely deserted me. The bravest heart is often appalled by the gestures of a mad woman. Had it been a man, I might have dealt with him as man deals with man in an extremity. But a woman,—and that woman Margaret, she who ought to have been my bride ———.

I approached her, and spoke soothingly; but she only laughed in my face. Then she pointed to her white drapery, and said “Look you, Claude; this is my wedding-garment. Ha! ha! ha!—brave sight! I have been so happy—so happy, Claude, since I married. Did you ever know what it is to be followed by an avenging fury; to have all the blood in your veins turned into molten lead; your hair become live serpents, which dart their fangs

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into your brain; to feel as though a red hot iron were being thrust into the cavities of your eyes; to pray for madness, yet to keep all your senses?—Ha, ha! I wish that I were mad.—My mother went mad before she died; but I—”. Then she broke off suddenly, and continued, after a short pause:—“Hark you, Claude; lower, lower, I must whisper it; they must not hear me. I would ask you one question, before I die,—one little question: Are *you* married?—’Tis a dreadful state, believe me, to be bound, body and soul, to one who hates you with the malignity of the damned!—Hark you, Claude: remain single; become a priest, a monk, any thing, but—”; and again she paused. There was a noise; it was the opening of a door. Margaret lifted up her eyes:—“In the name of the Most Highest,” she shrieked, “tell me, Claude, *who is that woman?*”

It was Ellen. She had been walking in the garden. She knew nothing of my strange visitant. She had seen a carriage at the door, and had mistaken it for that of her physician. Our little baby was in her arms.

“Who is that woman?” cried Margaret. Ellen would have asked the same question, but she could not; she was too much frightened.

Margaret glared at her, and my wife trembled. I rose up and hurried towards the door, that I

might whisper something into Ellen's ear,—a word or two of brief explanation. I made no answer to Margaret's question; I now thought only of my wife: but the mad woman, as though suddenly recollecting herself, cried out with a loud voice,—“I know her, I know her, Claude; she is the mother of your child;” and, at the same time, springing forward, she also rushed towards the door.

The face of my wife was as pale and as rigid as white marble. She would have fallen to the ground, but that the wall supported her. She could scarcely retain her hold of the infant, who lay cradled in her arms. The child slept.

We rushed towards the door, Margaret and I; but Margaret was the fleeter of the two. She did not walk,—she did not run; but she threw herself forward. It was a leap, a bound, a spring like that of the wild cat. She was the first to reach the door. She uttered a loud yell; and, with all the strength of a mad woman, she snatched the slumbering infant from the arms of its affrighted mother, and, holding it aloft with one arm, she rushed towards the chimney-piece, and with the other, seizing hold of the Burmese knife, which I have before had occasion to mention, she flourished the dreadful weapon with a significantly menacing gesture, and shouted out “Ha, ha, ha!—’Twould be a brave thing to make a sacrifice to Moloch!”

All this was done in a few moments of time.

They were dreadful moments. Ellen had fainted. I saw her stretch out her feeble arms and totter forward ; I heard her fall. She did not shriek, nor utter a sound ; but she fell flat on her face like a corpse.

But I could not look to her, for the wild woman continued to flourish the knife. A Burmese knife is a fearful instrument ; it has a blade sharper than a razor, and almost as large as a sword.

I approached the maniac. I was full of fear for the safety of my poor babe. I remembered that Margaret had said, " Did you ever feel an irresistible desire to commit murder, Claude ? "

It was clear that the ' homicidal propensity,' that most dreadful of all the many features which insanity develops, was strong upon her, and seeing this I trembled.

What was I to do ? If I had thrown myself upon her she would have slaughtered the infant immediately. I tried the effect of intimidation, without laying my hands violently upon her. " If you do not give me back my child," I exclaimed in a loud menacing voice, " you wicked woman, I will kill you."

But Margaret only laughed. " Kill me !—ha, ha, ha ! Kill me ; why I can kill—" and the

edge of the Burmese knife actually touched the throat of my child.

A thought struck me. There was a pistol on the table; it was loaded. I might save my child. I took it up, I cocked it, I presented it. "Margaret," I said, "give me back my child;—there is instant death in my hand."

"*And in mine!*" There was a pertinence in this rejoinder which made me hope; but it was such hope as the forlorn criminal encourages, when the judge happens to smile as he is putting on the black cap.

"Listen to me, Margaret," I continued. "If you want blood you shall have it. Only give me back my child, and you shall kill *me* in its stead."

"*You!*" cried Margaret, and I thought that there was hope. "*You!* why I love you better than any living creature in the world,—better than my own soul, much, oh much!—and better than my God. But——"

"Then, if you love me Margaret," and I spoke in a kind voice,—“you will give me back my child;” and I knelt to her.

"No, Claude, no," exclaimed the frantic woman. "I hate your wife from the depth of my soul, and I hate your child,—hate, hate, hate! The world is too little to contain us. We cannot live together. One of us must die."

Again I presented the pistol. I was an almost unerring shot, and my hand was steady at the time. Besides, I was close to Margaret; and the father was strong within me. Few can tell what it is to see the child of your bosom, your only one, your best beloved in the hands of a frantic woman, who flourishes a Burmese knife.

I had but to pull the trigger,—one little motion of my fore finger, and my child, my Everard, would have been safe. My mind oscillated painfully. I looked at Margaret; she once had been a woman, and had loved me, though now, indeed, she was little better than a wild beast.

She was still a woman. Though her eyes glared; though her nostrils were dilated, and her hair was loose, she was still a woman, and a wife; I could not hurt her; I threw aside the pistol. Blood would have been upon my head if mine enemy had haply been a man.

All this time my wife was lying with her face upon the ground. Still, silent, motionless, gathered in a heap,—perhaps dead. She looked like a woman prostrating herself to await the approach of the Juggernaut; or, a statue thrown down from its pedestal by the sacrilegious hand of an iconoclast.

I went down upon my knees. “Ha, ha!” cried Margaret,—“I will smite all the first-born. The

Lord has commanded me, and I will do it ;” and she lifted up her hand to strike.

There was a noise: a harsh, grating, rattling sound ; it was the sound of carriage-wheels.

Margaret heard it; her hand was stayed. “The Philistines be upon me !” she cried ; and relaxed her hold of the infant.

The child fell into my arms; for I was kneeling at Margaret’s feet. If the gates of Paradise had been opened to me, I could not have felt more elate than I did at that blessed moment !

“The Philistines be upon me !” cried Margaret: she trembled from head to foot. There was an entire alteration in her mien,—a change such as that which comes over the desperate inmate of a mad-house, when the foot-falls of his keeper are heard approaching. The bold menacing aspect,—the loud energetic voice,—the vehement gestures were no more. She quailed, she cowered, she shuddered ; her teeth chattered, and her limbs shook as though an icy current was blowing over her frame, “It is he! it is he!” she cried ; “save me from him! oh! where shall I go?” She thought that her husband was coming.

She ran to the farthest corner of the room, and crouched there like a hare in form. She gibbered and bowed her head until her chin rested upon her knees. Then her long unconfined hair fell forward

like a black veil, completely obscuring her face, and reaching even to the ground.

Never was such a consummate picture of desolation painted upon the tablets of the universe ! She who, but a year before, was so pure, so beautiful, so innocent,—reckless of sin and sorrow,—the child of genius and grace,—full of hope, and joy, and love, was now fearfully conditioned,—abject, hopeless, forlorn ; her features distorted,—her intellect snapt,—her heart breaking,—a thing to be pointed at, and to be mocked. It was, indeed, a piteous sight, that might have wrung the heart of a savage.

A strange thought occurred to her. She raised her head, and threw back her hair. “Go to the window, Claude, and cry out, ‘Sanctuary! sanctuary!’”

There were footsteps heard, and then a hand upon the door. Margaret tried to hide herself ; she looked around her, as though she were anxious to discover another door in the room ; but there was none ; so she bowed her head, and resumed her former position.

The door was thrown open. But he who entered was not my brother Frederick. It was Dr. ——— ; both he and the servant stood motionless with horror !

It was not strange. For just before the door

lay my wife, with her arms thrown out, and her face touching the ground ! I was bending over her prostrate form, and upon the point of lifting her from the earth. In the furthest corner of the room, was something which was seen to move ; it was a shapeless mass, half black and half white, —a figure that crouched like an incubus. It was Margaret !—she durst not look up !—My child lay screaming upon the sofa !

“ God is merciful !” I exclaimed ; “ oh, Doctor ! you are sadly wanted here.”

Dr. — was a kind man ; but his nerves were strong, and he soon recovered himself. Doctors are used to see dreadful scenes, but not such dreadful scenes as this !

“ Surely God sent you at this moment, Doctor ! There is death and madness in the room ! Let no time be lost !” And I pointed to my prostrate wife.

We raised her from the ground, and she opened her eyes. “ My child !—where is my child ?” she said, in a faint voice.

“ Safe !” I cried ; “ safe, Ellen !” But Ellen did not hear what I said.

“ There is no wound,” said Dr. —. He had anticipated a more dreadful calamity, than that which had actually befallen us.

In the meantime, Margaret, hearing a strange

voice, which she did not identify with her husband's, lifted up her eyes, and looked at us. Her glance fell upon Dr. —, and instantly she started upon her feet. "It is not he!—it is not he!" she cried. "Thank God, it is not my master!"

Then a shout followed, and a noise, which was neither a yell nor a laugh, but a terrible compound of both. She advanced towards us. I saw her coming, and I hastened to secure my child.

Just at this moment, a second time my wife opened her eyes. "Oh! take away that murderous woman! Let her be bound, or she will kill my child!"

"Come with me, Ellen, my love," said I; and, supporting her with my right arm around her waist, whilst, with my left, I formed a cradle for my infant, we three quitted the room together.

"Who is that fearful woman, my love?" said Ellen, as we passed along the hall.

"She is my brother's wife, and she is mad," I answered; "but Providence has kindly protected us; you had better repose yourself, Ellen. I will send Dr. — to you immediately."

"Go not near that frantic woman, oh Claude! my love, let me intreat you. She is more terrible than a tigress. I would not have you provoke her for the world."

“Fear not, Ellen,” I replied, “she will not seek to injure me. Besides, what have I to fear? I am a man,” and I quitted the room.

I found Dr. —— in close conversation with Margaret; they were sitting together on the sofa, and communing in a low voice. The mad woman appeared quite calm. Dr. —— had evidently subdued her. I approached; they were conversing in Italian. I learned afterwards, that Margaret had replied in the language of her native country, to a question put by the physician, and that Dr. ——, being an expert linguist, had rejoined in the same tongue. The practised eye of the physician saw at once the change that he had wrought upon the feelings of his distempered patient. He continued to speak in Italian, and Margaret listened to him with the most enraptured attention. Her countenance rapidly assumed an expression of comparative serenity; she sate quite still beside the doctor, and when she answered, her tones were soft and modulated, her language apposite, and her ideas correct. Never had a more potent spell been successfully employed by a magician.

We set food before her, but she would not eat. She took some bread in her hand, and, having broken it into fragments, she scattered it about the room.

“Cast thy bread upon the waters,” she exclaimed, “and thou shalt find it after many days.”

“*Avéte séte?*”^{*} said Dr. —; and Margaret became quiet immediately.

“*Dátemi dell’ ácqua,*”[†] she replied; and we gave her water to drink.

She swallowed it greedily; her thirst was excessive; for she had tasted nothing all that day. Besides, she was in a high fever, and had travelled a long distance.

She drank and was refreshed. It was a delicious draught. She set down the tumbler on the table, crying out, “More, more!” But she would not eat. Hunger and thirst seldom rage at the same time.

Dr. — called me aside. “We must confine our patient,” he said; “I dare say that she will follow me to a sleeping apartment, if you will give directions that one be got ready for her immediately. Perhaps, if she were left alone, she would take some sleep; but she must be watched. Can you speak Italian, Mr. Jerningham?”

I replied in the negative.

“This is a case,” he continued, “of what we

^{*} Are you thirsty?

[†] Give me some water.

call *mania*, or raving madness. Can you tell me what length of time the disease has subsisted, Mr. Jerningham? Ignorance upon this head will involve me in very painful ambiguity."

"I do not know, doctor. She came to me this morning in the condition which you now see." Then I told him all that I knew upon the subject. I spoke of her congenital predisposition to insanity,—her destructive propensities,—her evident inclination to commit homicide,—her religious fervour,—her Bible quotations. I apprehended that the mad woman had escaped from her husband, having first of all attempted to murder him.

"I will write," said the physician, "to Mr. —, who keeps an asylum not many miles from this. I will desire him to send a proper person to keep watch over our patient. In the meantime, by blood-letting, by exhibiting a small quantity of opium, and by shaving the head of our patient, we may do something to improve the morbid condition of the maniac."

All this was done.

That same afternoon a travelling-carriage, with four posters, drove at full speed up the gravel road, which led to my house. A gentleman alighted from it, and crossed my threshold. He eagerly inquired for me, and desired an immediate

interview. He was admitted, and shown into my library. It was my brother.

He was much altered since I last had seen him. There was a truculence in his aspect, which was remarkably unprepossessing. When I entered the room I extended my hand, but my brother refused to take it.

He was walking up and down; my entrance arrested his progress: "Tell me," he said, in a fierce voice, "whether my wife is beneath your roof?"

"She is:" was the laconic reply.

"And under your protection? — Come, speak; no paltering, Claude."

"She needs no protection," I answered, calmly, "when her own husband is in the house."

"Did you invite her hither?"

"How can you ask me? — You know better yourself, Frederick; I will not be questioned thus. You do not mean what you say."

"Come, sir, no evasions; none of your petty shifts. Answer my question, at once. Did my wife come here by your invitation, sir?"

"Sit down, Frederick," I replied, for I was determined not to lose my temper; "sit down, and endeavour to recollect yourself. You have a strange confusion in your ideas. You don't seem to know what you say."

Frederick was exasperated to an alarming degree. His eyes flashed fire, and his whole countenance was distorted with anger. He bit his nether lip, and clenched his fist with a significant gesture.

I folded my arms, and looked at him with an air of inexpressible contempt.

“Well,” I said, laughing, “are you going to strike me, brother?”

He turned away, and walked a few paces.—
“No, no,” he muttered, “the curse of Cain shall not be upon me.”

“It is there already,” I rejoined, in a low, sneering voice.

There was a pause; we looked at one another, but neither of the two spoke.

My brother was the first to break the silence.—
“Then you refuse to give me back my wife?”

“Frederick, will you listen to reason?”

“You have none.”

“I am in no mood,” I continued, in a calm voice, “to protract this angry discussion. It does not behove us by such unnatural contention as this, which is now brewing between us, to enhance the terrors of the tragedy now acting beneath my roof. Your wife is raving mad. She came to me this morning, I need hardly say, unexpectedly; for, I am sure that, in the sincerity of your heart, you do not suspect me of having enticed her hither.

Frederick, as I am a living man, I did not, until this morning, know that you had returned to England."

"Am I to believe this?" answered my brother "Am I to account this explanation the genuine offspring of truth, or the specious effusion of a plausible deceitfulness?"

"I have spoken. — Not another word of explanation shall pass these lips. You well know that if you were other than you are, you would now be lying at my feet."

"This assumption of virtuous indignation sits becomingly, indeed, upon one who, not content with harbouring atheists, converts his house into a refuge for the most atrocious criminals that ever lived!"

"Whilst *you* are here, my house is the refuge of the most atrocious criminal that ever lived. — Brother, I admire the ingenuousness of the confession you have just made."

Frederick gnashed his teeth.

"Do you know," he said, "what my wife has done? — Do you know why she left my protection?"

"I suspect the reason," said I, in a voice of cutting significance.

"Claude," continued my brother, "if you were to wake, one night, and see a woman, with stream-

ing hair and flashing eyes, bending over your couch with an uplifted hammer in one hand, and a huge nail, in the other, whose point touches your temples, what should you think of that woman?"

"That she is mad," I answered very quietly, and then in an altered tone; "Frederick, this is a dreadful business. You wrong me, indeed, if you suspect that I have had any participation in bringing about this fearful catastrophe."

My brother made no answer. He fixed his eyes upon the ground, and was apparently absorbed in thought. "Would you like," I said, "to see your wife? She is already in the custody of one who is skilled in the treatment of the insane."

My brother raised his eyes, "To see her? Would I like to see her? And I am to have your permission, I suppose, to see my own wife!"

"Frederick, I intreat you to be reasonable. What is it that you desire to do? Rely upon it, that if your intentions are right, you will have my earnest co-operation towards putting those intentions into effect."

"I am afraid," replied my brother, drily, "that we entertain very different opinions upon the nature of right and wrong."

"I am afraid we do. But in God's name, let us come to some understanding. What is it that you wish me to do?"

"Nothing; unless it be to suffer one of your servants to conduct me to my wife's apartment. It is my intention to carry her away with me."

"You will kill her."

"It cannot be helped."

The blood in my veins curdled with disgust. The extreme heartlessness of my brother, the utter indifference with which he articulated these last few words, the open repugnance with which he met my approaches towards a reconciliation, the truculent expression of his countenance, the sarcastic energy of his voice, the great injustice of his pretended suspicions, all huddled together, formed a medley which sickened me to the death. Oh! what would I not have given to have discovered at that moment, that Frederick was not my brother?

These last few words filled the cup of my indignation to the very brim. "It cannot be helped," he said. What cannot be helped? I thought; and shuddered.

An idea struck me. "I will humble him," I said. "He shall lick the dust of humiliation. He shall see that I know right well the abject creature that he is."

My hour was at hand. The harvest of my revenge was ready for the sickle of the reaper. If Frederick had known the thoughts which were

then stirring in my breast, he would have felt as Faustus felt in that dread hour, which was doomed to witness the fulfilment of his fearful compact with the fiend. The index of the clock pointed.

“ Frederick,” I said, as I walked towards my escritoire. “ I have a few papers here, which have come into my possession as the executor of our late uncle. There are one or two documents amongst them, which as relating immediately to yourself, it behoves you to make yourself acquainted with.”

“ What are they ?” said Frederick.

“ You shall see.” I looked at my brother, and his countenance was pale as death.

“ My uncle was the executor of my father, and I am the executor of my uncle. It happens, therefore, that in my possession are the papers of both our relatives. This box contains a variety of letters, which I have carefully sorted and numbered.”

“ Ha !” cried my brother, and he trembled exceedingly. His lips quivered; he was full of fear. Like one who has seen a “ vision of the night,” “ the hair of his flesh stood up.”

“ You do not seem very well, Frederick ; but I do not wonder, for the memory of this, our late bereavement—our triple loss—is enough to agitate

one whose nature is sterner than your own. Your feelings do you honour, Frederick, infinite honour ; they do indeed."

Then I continued, "Perhaps, as the mention of our dead parents' names has so affected your sensibility, Frederick, you will not be able to peruse these papers ; they will overcome you ; you had better not attempt it. I will read them to you, and you shall listen."

"No, no," gasped my brother ; "give them to me — give them ; I can read."

"I will save you the trouble, Frederick. Hark you. Here is a letter from yourself, written eight years ago, and addressed to our poor father. Upon my word, boy as you then were, this document exhibits no contemptible skill in the art of epistolary composition."

"Give it to me." And my brother would have snatched it from my hand, but that he could not. He was too far off.

"I need not trouble you with the whole of this elegant effusion. An extract or two here and there will answer my purpose sufficiently. This, as I have said before, is a letter from Frederick Jerningham, which is yourself, to Charles Jerningham, Esq., of the Bengal Civil Service, dated Heathfield, January 3rd, 18—."

Then I proceeded to read in a calm, clear voice,

throwing a marked emphasis upon certain words, and every now and then looking full into the face of my brother, who, livid with rage and fear commingled, sat cowering before me, his eyes cast down, and his hands, with a convulsive grasp clutching his tremulous knees.

“ ‘I can assure you, my dear father, that it wrings my heart to its very core to be acquainted, as I am, with the evil courses of my unfortunate brother, Claude, and yet to feel how utterly unable I am, either by precept or by example, to divert him from his erratic ways, and to guide him into the paths of integrity’—(a well rounded period that, and the metaphor admirably sustained.) ‘He has unhappily connected himself with a youth named Sinclair, who, to the many vices of a corrupt heart and a morality dissolute upon principle, unites the most hardened atheism, and an utter contempt for all laws, civil, moral, and divine. This boy, this young infidel, who possesses very considerable power of intellect and a remarkably fascinating exterior, which render him the more dangerous, has contrived, like another Circe, to ensnare my poor brother with the net of his skillfully woven devices, and to convert a well-principled, and well educated boy, into a thing no better than—a swine.’ (By my faith, Frederick, you did not go to school for nothing.) ‘The ascendancy

which this young Sinclair possesses over his unfortunate victim is extraordinary. Claudé is devoted to him.' (How came those few words of truth to creep into your letter, Frederick?) 'He stands, as it were, on the brink of a precipice, and if he is not removed before long beyond the influence of this evil companionship, he will be ruined past all redemption—an outcast from God and man.' Well, sir, what have you to say in defence of this precious composition?"

"That it is"—and his voice trembled; there was a mighty conflict in his breast between wrath and fear. He was about to utter the word "truth;" but he durst not. He saw that I had other papers in my hand, and he knew not what they might contain. Should he avow the authorship, and insist upon the truth of the statements contained in that letter? He had not the courage. What should he do? He collected himself for an effort, and gasping fearfully as he spoke, faltered out "a forgery—a forgery."

He had not the power to rise from his seat, or he would have risen. He remained seated, and durst not so much as lift up his eyes, lest they should fall upon him whom he had injured. It is certain that horrible thoughts were then stirring in his breast, but I know not what they may have been.

I took up another letter—a third—a fourth, and

read extracts of a similar tendency to that which I have just recorded. Even after I had quitted England my brother continued to write accounts of my "profligate behaviour," as he called it, to my deluded father. The information contained in these last-mentioned communications he pretended to have derived from letters, which he himself had received from me. "Well, Frederick," I said, "what have you to say to these extracts?"

"Forgeries,—forgeries throughout," gasped my brother in a voice like that of a man who cries out for mercy, when the knife of the murderer is at his throat. Then making a desperate effort, which almost stifled him, he exclaimed, "By the God that made me, Claude, I never wrote one word of these letters!"

"Look at them, scrutinize them, compare them. Is this your hand-writing? and is this?"—and I threw a bundle of letters towards him.

He did not stoop to pick them up. He sat motionless as a statue.

"Hearken, Frederick, one extract more. This is a letter addressed to my uncle and written when I was in India. It bears the Oxford post-mark, and it is sealed with your own seal—the one which I myself gave you, as a pledge of friendship before I quitted England. Tolerable evidence this of authenticity, I take it!"

“ I received yesterday a letter from my brother. I am sorry the nature of the communication prevents me from enclosing it to my dear uncle. But it contains nothing which could give you any pleasure but an assurance that his health is very good.’ (Take my advice, Frederick, the next time you invent letters from India to say nothing about health, because beneath a tropical sun it is a very precarious reliance, and not to be calculated upon, with any certainty, two days together.) ‘ This letter was evidently not intended to meet any eye but my own; and I much wonder that Claude should have so far forgotten the nature of my tastes and disposition as to think that an account of his profligate career in Calcutta could possibly give *me* any pleasure. * * * *. By the bye, I have recently discovered that the opinion which I formed, when a boy, of my brother’s friend, young Sinclair, so far from being erroneous, as you declared it to be, was entirely correct, my dear uncle, although you reprehended me, as I remember, for what you called ‘ want of charity,’ though, in reality, it was nothing but discernment.’ (A great stretch of independence upon your part, Frederick.) ‘ This, Sinclair, since he quitted Dr. R—’s, as an old school-fellow of mine has informed me, has been cut off by his father, and discarded by his family. He has connected himself with a den of

atheists, who meet at Mr. ——'s nightly; he has published a volume of atheistical poetry; he has been brought before a magistrate for a misdemeanour of some kind or other; and he is now living with a young woman, who, I regret to say, is not his wife.'—Well, Frederick, what say you to that?"

But still he had no other answer but "A forgery—by the God that made me, I wrote not a word of this!"

"Is this a forgery?" I said; and advancing towards my brother, I put into his hand a letter, the seal of which was unbroken.

Frederick looked at the superscription. It was in the hand-writing of our departed uncle, and was addressed in tottering characters, which bespoke the feebleness of him who wrote them, to "Frederick Jerningham, Esq. *To be delivered after my death.*"

"Yes," I said, "it is a letter from the dead. Read it, and God grant that there may be some comfort within it."

"When was it written?" asked my brother in a voice tremulous with emotion. His hand was shaking so violently that he could scarcely open the letter.

"An hour before his death. They are his last

words, the hand which wrote them was never lifted up again."

- I looked at my brother. He had torn open the letter and was holding it with one hand, which rested on his knee; whilst the other was thrust into his bosom, as though he were striving, with all his might, to quell the palpitations of a heart, whose pulses throbbed as rapidly and as tumultuously as boiling water.

His head was bowed down; his chin reclined upon his breast; his eyes I saw not, for they were fixed upon the letter, but there were large beady drops of perspiration upon his ample forehead. His breathings were loud and rapid. You would have thought that he had just withdrawn himself from the turmoil of a mortal conflict. Something fell upon the letter; it was a tear.

He continued to read. For several minutes his eyes remained fixed upon the paper. He did not lift up his head; another tear fell, and another: he crunched the letter convulsively in his hand, and presently it dropped upon the floor. The arms of the unhappy man hung listlessly down. He endeavoured to rise, but for some moments he could not; at length he stood up and looked at me. Never did the human countenance wear a more piteous expression of utter hopelessness than did my brother's. His eye-lids drooped; his

mouth was drawn down ; his face was pale as a spectre's. He stretched out his arms ; he tottered forward ; his lips were seen to move, but he articulated only one word, and that one word was, "Forgive." He advanced towards me, and, sobbing loudly, threw himself into my arms.

There was a world of agony and of bliss in that fraternal embrace. It was the first that had ever been. We wept like two children.

I tried to speak, but the words choaked me. I would have said, "You are forgiven," but I had not the power to articulate.

At that moment the door of the apartment was seen to open, and one entered, whose face was radiant with an expression of peace, benevolence, and joy.

It was Everard Sinclair. He had been abroad all the day. He knew nothing of the dreadful scenes which had been acting during his absence. He had been abroad upon a mission of charity ; it was the business of his life to do good. He was about to retire ; but I called him to me. I could not speak, but there was that in my face, which said, "Come hither,"—and he came. My brother heeded him not. He saw nothing ; he heard nothing, unless it were a roaring, as of many waters, in his head. There was silence. Everard's lips moved ; but no accents escaped them.

Perhaps he was praying. At length, I spoke, —
“ Brother, this is Everard Sinclair.”

Frederick lifted his head from my shoulder. His dim eyes fell upon Everard. “ Forgive,” he said, faintly. It was the only word that he could utter.

What a blessed moment was this! I thought that I heard a voice, saying, “ As upon earth, so in the heavens ; as by his fellows so by his God, the repentant sinner is forgiven.”

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Awake your love t

FREDERICK JERNINGH

“ My beloved and
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task ; so great has be
solation. ‘ From the
the Scripture, ‘ the t
has been too full to s
words.

“ Let me, first of all, speak of my wife. Let me tell you, before I retrace the path of retrospection, what we are now doing. You will see that I write this from the coast. My poor Margaret is with me; the broken thread of her intellect is not as yet re-united. Let me speak of these things with composure. Do not think, oh, my brother! that because my words come forth coherently, forming themselves into measured sentences, that I do not suffer, believe me, Claude, as few have ever suffered, and lived. Do not think that my mind is tranquil, because my *written* feelings express little beyond the pale of every-day life. You cannot tell what it costs me to write thus,—but let me at once speak of real things.

“ We are at Dover. We sail to-morrow for Calais. A young Frenchman, who has been many years a pupil of Esquirol's, attends us. I have engaged him at a high salary, to be,—I tremble as I write the word,—the *keeper* of my poor wife! Having studied under the first man of the day, he is, of course, well skilled in the treatment of insanity in all its stages. I have conversed with him frequently, and have every reason to think that he is a young man of first-rate capabilities. I fancy that he sometimes looks at me, thinking that he has *two* patients.

“ We start forthwith for Italy. I scarcely need

explain to *you*, my brother, the motives which have induced me (for ~~they~~ are so apparent) to take this step. Italy is the birth-place of ~~my~~ wife. I am fully convinced, or, rather, I should say, I ~~am~~ full of hope, that a return to her native country will work a beneficial change upon the morbid state of her intellect. You know how she has always idolized whatever is connected with Italy. You know how, in days gone by, she would converse for hours together upon this one delightful theme,—how she loved the language,—the literature,—the arts,—the very name of her country. You know that when she sate before her easel, she would paint nothing but Italian skies ; you know that when she sate beside her harp, she would sing nothing but Italian songs. It has been the one desire of her life, to revisit her native country. As yet she has always been thwarted : I have thwarted, cheated, deluded her. I shall come soon to speak of the fearful catastrophe, which my trickeries have brought about.

“Margaret now, day and night, raves incessantly about Italy. When she is violent, my young friend, De Lisle, who resided some years, when a boy, in Bologna, sings to her snatches of Italian songs, and instantly she becomes quiet as a lamb. She will speak no other language but Tuscan, and, fortunately, De Lisle and I are both able to converse

with her. She speaks often of her father ; sometimes cursing, sometimes blessing him ; now calling him her beloved parent, and her only friend,—now a cruel exacting tyrant, the greatest enemy she hath in the world — the man who has broken her heart. Your name, too, my brother, is often heard to come forth ; it is the only name she ever utters, which is *always* coupled with an endearing epithet. Oh, Claude ! I have wronged you fearfully. She would, indeed, have been to thee a loving wife.

“ But let me be brief. We start to-morrow for Italy. We shall proceed straightway to Naples, only halting a day or two at Paris, to consult Monsieur Esquirol. At Naples we shall see Mr. De Laurier. You will ask me whether I am not afraid to meet the father of my wife ? All human fears have gone from me. In the extremity of desolation there is some comfort. And now, my brother, I will speak of the past.

“ Let the sun of your memory shine forth ! Let the mists of forgetful obscurity be rolled away, and, with a retrospective eye, look, Claude, upon the paths you have trodden,—upon the country you have travelled over,—upon things which have been, oh, my brother ! Look back as far as the eye will reach,—even to the very threshold of your existence,—what see you there ? a wicked brother

thwarting you,—oppos
—mixing foul venom
childish happiness.
brother,—that one who
did Cain slay his bro
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envious, Claude !

“ Do not mistake me
not virtue enough for
Claude, I never desired
any living creature, an
upon it as a triumph to
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hatred or of my selfish
the spirit, the divinit
ciple, I despised. I
things. I hated to s
desired not that love f

“ But you,—you, my
object of my envy. I
ber, I hated you. C
first time, you travers
passengers liked you
I know not why. I w
I possessed not thos
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was a deficiency somev
say where. I was, as

and, I have heard say, of great quickness ; but still I was not made to be beloved,—strangers turned themselves away from me.

“ You will say, that my evil disposition was the cause of this ;—no, Claude ; I am inclined to think that it was the *effect*. I am one who have always thought, that whatever moral qualities we possess, are the result solely of circumstances ;—but I will not enlarge upon this. I have not the power to analyze my past feelings, or to desire, upon such an occasion as this, to give vent to any philosophical speculations. Let it suffice that on board ship I hated you, because the passengers had kinder words, and blander smiles, and more affectionate gestures for you than they had for your brother. But this was not jealousy ; I would have been well content if the passengers, one and all, had hated us both with a dire hatred, as long as they hated us both with an equal degree of intensity. It was not that *I* wished to be beloved ; it was that I wished *you* not to be.

“ Methinks that, already, I have told my history. The same principle of hatred which stirred within me when a child, influenced the whole subsequent tenour of my existence. Yes, Claude ; every action of my life has emanated from one source,—from envy ; than which, in the whole catalogue of unrighteousness, there is nought more filthy,—more

defiled,—more truly virtues of other men saith the preacher, ‘that for this a man is I should have hated been so worthy of my

“We landed in Ex favourite. The curse wherever I went I younger brother, were I called to my at resources,—I made v all my efforts were u struggles, the more studied the character as much as in me la to his in all its ext were seen through,—entered the house h for me; and yet I s made no effort to gai

“We went to scho had begun to wear aspect. I said to m my brother in the rac his heels.’ I though I thought of our far- that a lie, craftily i

Then I calculated the probabilities of a discovery. Time,—distance,—the plausible aspect of my tale; I deemed that I was quite secure. You know, Claude, what I did:—I wrote to my parents;—I spake of many things, which had no existence but in my lying epistles.

“Your connexion with Everard Sinclair enhanced the bitterness of my hatred. I never, in my whole life, had felt so much inclined to love another, as I did to love this boy. Up to this point, I had loved no one but myself; but when I looked upon young Sinclair, the sluice-gates of my affections were thrown open. Aye, Claude, I loved your friend; yet I know not that I have any right to make use of this sacred word. I felt that he would have been dear to me, had he not been doated upon by you. And then I began;—but I scarcely know the things which I am writing of, oh, my brother! I have said that I *never* loved; and now I say, that I loved young Sinclair. I must endeavour to explain myself; it will be strange, indeed, if many verbal inconsistencies do not creep into this letter.

“When first I beheld Everard Sinclair, he was walking arm-and-arm with you. I stood still and gazed at him; then I turned away; a curse was on my lips;—the better feelings which had gained the mastery in my breast, which had rushed suddenly upon me, were smothered. I said to myself

‘No; I must not love him. It is enough that he is my brother’s friend. Curse,—curse them both! and I bit my nether lip till the blood came from it oh! how well do I remember that hour!

“But I have often thought in my after-days, that had Everard Sinclair not been *your* friend, he would have been *mine*; and that I should have been (yet, how idle are these conjectures), a something that I am not now, perhaps indeed, an upright man.

“Need I follow up this history of my most flagrant enormities? You know how I endeavoured to impose upon my uncle, and how utterly I failed. You know how I endeavoured to impose upon my parents, and how entirely I succeeded. I was selfish,—exorbitantly selfish; but my malignity was stronger than my selfishness. I desired earnestly to entail upon myself the possessions of my father and of my uncle, but I would rather have walked a beggar all my days, than have shared the wealth of the whole Indies with *you*.

“You quitted England. I need not tell you, for you have long ago been aware of this, that my representations caused you to receive that appointment to India. I did not precisely intend this; but I was not sorry when I saw that it was so. You will not desire, I am sure, that I should unravel the intricate web of my most evil machina-

tions. It was my ambition to ruin you utterly in the good opinion both of my uncle and my father. I saw at once that it was a more difficult task to deceive the former than the latter. I was glad, therefore, when you quitted England. There was no chance of my deluding Matthew Jerningham, as long as you dwelt beneath his roof; and I knew that, although you were going to the country wherein our parents were living, it was more than probable that you would be unable to see them for a period of many years. Besides, Claude, it was worm-wood to me to behold our uncle lavishing upon you the affection which I so unequally shared. Every kind word that he spake unto you went to my heart like the point of a dagger.

“I went to Oxford. I still continued to prosecute my ungodly scheme. I played the hypocrite with some success, but I do not think that I ever imposed upon the keen intellect of Matthew Jerningham,—not directly, at least; but by cheating the authorities of the University, I, through them, deluded my uncle; for they spake of me as a young man of a most unblemished way of life, and Mr. Jerningham could not do otherwise than believe them. But my morality—I never had any. I put on a mask of religion. I mixed up a sort of scriptural jargon with my every-day conversation; I eschewed the society of my fellow-students, and

my character was looked upon as unimpeachable; but perhaps in the whole University there was not another such profligate as myself. I knew the value of a good reputation; and ensconcing myself behind the shelter of an unsullied fame, I celebrated my unrighteous orgies in security. I was grown old in debauchery ere I ceased any longer to be a minor.

“You returned to England, and I was exceeding sorrowful; but, when I learned that during your sojourn in India you had not once looked upon our parents, I ceased to lament your abrupt return; for I was doubly armed, and that which weakened my resources upon one side served to strengthen them on the other. I reflected long and deeply upon the best course to be followed in this emergency; and, at length, I cried out with a joyful voice.—‘Yes; I see it all; I have duped my parents; they, at least, are secure; and now let me turn unto my uncle. I will receive Claude with open arms; I will pour out a number of sounding words which shall appear like the overflowings of a contrite and penitent heart; then my uncle will hear of this, and he will love me all the better;’—and hugging this belief, I rejoiced; you know what I did,—oh, my brother!

“You had not been at home many months ere we received an account from India of the twofold

death of our parents. Oh, what a triumph was this ! You were cut off with a poor legacy, whilst I,—but I have no words to express my delight upon that occasion. The joy which entered my soul made me frantic. It was unholy joy. If my parents had died in this country, I almost think that I should have danced upon their graves. Yet no ; for then I might have loved them ; but as it was I had not seen them since my infancy. I knew not the tones of their voices ; the lineaments of their countenances ; but I knew that I was the sole heir of my father, and this made me frantic with rapture. I slept that night the sleep of a drunken man. I intoxicated myself ; I poured down my throat large draughts of wine until I fell senseless on the floor.

“ Success makes people reckless : having gained to myself, by my wicked machinations, the whole property of my father, I began to think less of duping my uncle Matthew ; I was not satiated, but the keen edge of my appetite was somewhat blunted ; I became more unguarded in my conduct ; my thoughts no longer converged to this one point of defrauding my uncle.

“ I heard that you were courting Margaret de Laurier : I come now to speak of the crowning act—the dread catastrophe of my atrocious villainy—they told me that you were betrothed to Miss

Everard Sinclair, and we
friend in the north. By
your name coupled with
came a monster—I was
spirit began to tear me
you two in the same way
remember the triumph
day, about Diderot's novel
confounded—how humili-
not—you cannot know
remembered day.

“ Well, Claude, I was
when news was brought
to make Miss De Lau-
idea entered my brain :
when I had read the le-
gence—‘ I will rive and
them ; they shall not be

“ I knew Miss De
was beautiful—that she
full of love—in short,

yourself the affections of such a maiden as Margaret De Laurier ; I had myself been dazzled by her beauty ; I had looked upon her with an unchaste eye ; I had not loved her, for love is not otherwise than holy ; but a wild, unhallowed, passion had been awakened within me, when I contemplated her extreme loveliness. ‘ And shall this woman,’ I said, ‘ become the lawful wife of my brother ?’

“ From that moment I hated her—with a great hate exceedingly I hated her, because her heart was yours : then I conceived a plan for the undoing of you both, which has, alas ! been but too successful.”

* * * * *

[The artifices which Frederick employed to delude his unhappy victim, have already found a record in these pages : they need not to be repeated here. I have expunged them, therefore, from my brother’s letter.]

* * * “ You met Margaret at Lord Charles Mount-Herbert’s ; you dwelt together beneath the same roof for many days. I heard of this, and a legion of strange fancies took possession of my brain. I had never been kind to Margaret ; I had never been as an husband to her, but now I was more than ever exasperated ; I accused her I know not of what—of adultery—of

every wicked thing that is done under the sun ; I loaded her with all evil epithets ; she remonstrated, and I lifted up my hand ; yes, Claude, I did indeed, I smote her.

“ You will remember, that when our poor uncle was taken ill, Everard Sinclair wrote unto me a letter, beseeching me to visit the dying man, albeit beneath the roof of my brother ; I would not ; my heart was hardened against him ; I forgot all that he had done for me ; I knew that I could impose upon him no longer ; besides, I wanted not his possessions ; I was already rich ; I desired no more ; and I began to hate my uncle for the unerring love which he bare towards you.

“ I went abroad ; I had seen for some time, that Margaret’s intellect was giving way ; I began to pity her ; for the first time, I felt certain pangs of remorse ; I tried to comfort her ; I whispered in her ear—‘ Shall I take thee to Italy, my love ? ’ She started, looked incredulously into my face, and crying out—‘ Sayest thou this to torture me ? ’ she threw herself beseechingly at my feet.

“ I lifted her up—‘ No, Margaret,’ I said, ‘ I torture you not—there is no irony in my words : thou shalt visit thy native country before we return to England. Thou shalt go to Naples, and see thy father.’ There was an unusual kindness in my voice, as I spake, and Margaret wept plentifully.

“ We were then in Paris. It was the month of December, and I resolved to pass my winter in that gay metropolis. I postponed my visit to Italy, intending — yes, Claude, really intending — to devote all the summer months to my projected sojourn at Naples. Margaret did not murmur at this — her soul panted eagerly to enjoy the luxury of an Italian summer. This one hope supported her; when she was wretched she thought of Italy; when I reviled her she remembered my promise.

“ Whilst we were at Paris, my poor uncle died. The nature of his will did not astonish me: his death did not affect me — but I hated you still more — no words can tell how I hated you.

“ The winter, and the earlier months of summer passed away. I loved Paris, for I revelled there. My sensual propensities found abundant means of gratification in that city. It would be bootless to speak of these things. I sunk deep into the slough of debauchery.

“ In May I proposed to set out for Italy. I made every preparation for the journey. It was my intention to follow a circuitous route: to pass through Flanders, and thence up the Rhine. I started, therefore, for Calais; and by way of Dunkirk and Newport, I arrived at Ostend, but — I proceeded no further; for something happened

which turned me aside from the only virtuous resolution I had ever formed in my life.

“We halted one night at Ostend. I know not why, but I could not sleep; I was restless, I lay awake for hours; but my poor wife, lying beside me, enjoyed the forgetfulness of a serene slumber. How beautiful she was—pale, still, and calm; she was like a sculptured image of sleep. I looked upon her; I never in my whole life had felt so much disposed to love her. I pressed my lips to her soft cheek, and instantly *her* lips began to move. She said something. At first I could not catch her words. I bent over her, and inclined my ear till it almost touched her lips — again she spoke—I heard her distinctly—‘Claude, Claude,’ she said, ‘it is you, my beloved; how kind you are.’ And then — but it matters not what I felt. Sleep soon came upon me; for hatred is my natural element, and those passions which make others restless, only make me more calm.

“But my resolution was taken. I now regarded myself in the light of an injured man. It was clear to me that my wife was an adulteress; it could not be otherwise. Can there be, thought I, any stronger proof of guilt than this involuntary betrayal — these babblings of a tell-tale tongue unarmed of its caution by sleep? But I said

nothing. On the following morning I behaved to my wife as usual. I spake in rapturous language of our projected visit to Italy, and Margaret was more-full of joy than she had been for many months. 'Methinks, though, this land-travel is somewhat tedious,' she said, 'much as I desire to visit the far-famed country, which borders upon the Rhine, I think, Frederick, for I am foolishly impatient to set my foot upon the soil of Italy, that Germany and the Low Countries might be explored by us on our way home; what sayest thou?' and she laid her hand upon my shoulder, and looked into my face beseechingly.

"I knew that my time was come; so I answered in a kindly voice, 'My feelings, Margaret, are in accordance with thine: we will proceed with all haste to Italy; we will not dally upon our journey thither, but when we retrace our footsteps, then will we afford time to loiter. A steam-vessel starts from this place to night, and proceeds directly, as far as Berne—from Berne we will go by land to Genoa, and at Genoa we will take ship for Naples; what say you to this, my Margaret?' 'God bless you,' she replied: and the tears trilled down her cheek as she spoke.

"Two hours before midnight we embarked—ourselves, our servants, our carriages, our horses—all went on board the steam-packet. When Margaret

stood upon the deck, next morning she found herself winding along the *River Thames*. ‘It is the Rhine, Margaret,’ said I, ‘a fair country do we see upon either side of this arrowy river. What thinkest thou of it, my love? Ere sun-set we shall have reached Cologne,’ and then I laughed — oh! such a laugh of triumphant malignity broke from me.

“But Margaret made no answer. She uttered no word; she heaved no sigh; she shed no tear; but her intellect gave way — she stood beside me, an insane woman; and I trembled when I thought of what I had done.

“But she was tranquil. There was nothing but the vacant look, and the indifference to all passing events which told me that this awful change had taken place. She seemed to be turned into stone; the blood had stagnated in her veins. She was benumbed into an unbroken torpor.

“We landed at London. We went at once to an hotel — and that night — let me hurry over the events of that dreadful night. I was weary; I retired early to rest, for I had slept not on the night preceding; and I was soon in a profound slumber. But feverish dreams haunted me; I had strange and unearthly visions; a something horribly indistinct stood before me, and I was seized with a great fear. I started, and starting I

awoke. Oh God ! what was the reality that I beheld ?—A sight more dreadful than that which had haunted me in my dream.

“Margaret, her hair all loose and streaming wildly down her back, her eyes flashing, her nostrils dilated, her cheeks pale as a spectre’s, stood over me ; her right hand, which held a hammer, was uplifted, as though she were about to strike the head of a large nail which with her other hand she held upright, so that the point of it touched my temples, awaiting the fall of the hammer. One moment more, had my slumbers been protracted, I should have died as Sisera died by the hand of another Jael. But God, in his mercy, spared me — Oh, my brother ! that was a fearful night.

“You know the rest. — She escaped from me. Incautiously I quitted the house to go myself in quest of a physician, and Margaret in the mean time eloped ; for she had money — and what will money not do ? There was some method in her madness or she would not thus have eluded my vigilance.

“I have done—dreadful as has been the task, I have fulfilled the office which I have imposed upon myself, deeming that it behoved me so to do. — I have acquitted myself with a degree of propriety, which I scarcely could have expected to retain upon such a harrowing occasion as this.—

But do not think, Claude, that I am a cold, unrepentant, systematic villain, because I have been able to disclose such a dread confession as this, in sober, subdued language, which contains scarce a single sentence expressive of my present agony. *I have been* all this — I have been cold, systematic, unrepentant ; but believe me that I am otherwise now. I have more than once thrown aside the pen when I felt conscious that I was beginning to rave. Extreme misery, oh, my brother ! is not boisterous, but quiet.

“One word more, ere I sign my name to this confession. My uncle’s letter — that wonder-working document which checked me in my career of vice, — you know not its contents, Claude — you know not what it was that wrought upon me with such an inconceivable power. It was—*my uncle’s blessing*. Every line of this letter breathed charity and love. What a beautiful mind was Matthew Jerningham’s ! He told me that there was but one little cloud which obscured the horizon of his last moments, and that little cloud was nothing else but the thought of my hostility towards you. Yet he blessed me—in spite of this, with his last breath he pronounced a benediction upon me — me, the unworthy one. Oh ! with what truth wrote Jeremy Taylor : ‘ The last words of a dying man are like the teeth of a wounded lion, making a

deeper impression in the agony, than in the most vigorous strength.'

" My brother, I will not ask you to forgive me : you *have* forgiven ; but as you are the one, whom throughout life I have persecuted, methinks that God would hearken to *your* prayers for the soul of poor

" FREDERICK JERNINGHAM."

CHAPTER IX.

Concerning God, free will and destiny
Of all that earth has been, or yet may be,
All that vain men imagine, or believe
Or hope can paint, or suffering can show
We descanted ; and I (for ever still
Is it not wise to make the best of ill,
Argued against despondency.

SHELLEY'S "Julian"

ABOUT six weeks after the date of
with Frederick Jerningham, Sinclair
sitting together in the drawing-room
at Heathfield, conversing upon a subject
all others, was the most interesting

night. Ellen had retired to her chamber; whilst Everard and I sate together, by an open window, which looked towards the garden, enjoying the silence of the night, and the coolness of the nocturnal air. There was no moon, but a myriad of stars bespangled the great canopy of the heavens.

We were speaking of the selfishness of the world. "I have often thought," said Everard, "that what we are wont to call selfishness, is nothing more than a sort of suicidal propensity, which ignorance very often developes. Selfishness defeats its own object. For my part, I wonder that they whose sole desire it is to render themselves happy, do not for once try what may be the result of making others as happy as themselves. When Xerxes offered a reward for a new form of pleasure, it is strange that there was not a wise man in the kingdom to whisper into his ear, *Εὐεργεσία*! Benevolence never palls. It is the only flower upon earth which never withers or decays. Let the selfish man once make an experiment of its virtues, and he will forsake his sensuality for ever."

"We must change his heart first," I replied. "There are some men who would derive no pleasure from doing a good act."

"I think not so. He who has virtue enough voluntarily to do good, has virtue enough also to

experience the delights of having done good. He will stoop, as it were, to pick up a stone, and find that he has a jewel in his hand. It will be with him, as it was with Pyrrhias, the boatman, of whom Plutarch tells us, that having rescued, by his humane exertions, an old man, who had been captured by pirates, he received, as the wages of humanity, several earthenware vessels, which apparently contained only a quantity of pitch, but which, upon examining their contents, proved, in reality, to have been laden with gold. Such are always the wages of benevolence ; we appear only to be repaid with pitch, but in reality, we are repaid with gold."

" In heaven."

" Ay, there also :—but I speak now of earthly wages. What are the wages of benevolence ?—happiness,—happiness unbounded. What a beautiful thing it is to contemplate one's own good works ! When we have built a house, or planted a vineyard, or sown a field with corn, we contemplate the work delightedly. A sort of active pride stirs within us ; we are conscious of having *done something*. But to see a smile where erst was a tear, to see a look of joy on the human face, which so lately wore an aspect of despondency ; to see peace and content where once was strife and affliction, and to feel that all this is the result of our

own exertions ; — this indeed is joy, joy greater than that which animates the founder of a city. We feel that we have not only done something, but that we have done more,—we have *done good*.”

“ And that we are laying up treasure in heaven.”

“ True ; but that is another consideration. I know that *you* will not misunderstand me, when I say that we may both do good, and feel pleasure in having done good, without once thinking of God. There is such a thing as natural morality ; but I will not enlarge upon this. Old Owen Feltham draws a happy distinction, when he says, — ‘ Let my mind be charitable, that God may accept me : let my actions express it, that man may be benefited.’ ”

“ I could cavil at this, if I were inclined,” said I ; but I did not, for I loved better to hear Everard, than to hear myself, discoursing upon these subjects.

“ By loving our neighbour,” continued Everard, “ insensibly we serve God ; but by loving God, we do not serve our neighbour, unless our obedience keeps pace with our love, which is not always the case. Religion is often selfish ; benevolence, never. We may shut ourselves up in a cloister, abjure the vanities of the world, mortify the flesh,

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 city, and good-works ought to be unto us
 the garlands and libations were to the
 Did you ever read that beautiful little

I replied in the negative.

"It is to be found in D'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale*. An angel appeared unto Ben Adhem, and the angel was writing in a book. 'What writest thou?' asked Ben Adhem, for he was a good man, and he was not afraid. 'The names,' replied the angel, 'of those who love God.'—'And is mine there?' asked Abon; but the angel only answered, 'No.'—'Write me then, at least,' cried the good man, 'for one who has loved his neighbour.'—The angel wrote something in the book and vanished. The next day it re-appeared, and, pointing with a finger to the names of those who were registered in the book, behold the name of

First in the list of those

He said, "and worthy
there is no religion which
the efficacy of morality and
the Christian religion. There
is so charitable as those of Jesus."

But Christianity has been objected to, on
ground that it is not that which you declare it
to be. Shaftesbury has hurled his lance at it, be-
cause, as he roundly asserts, it is positively ini-
mical to the formation of all private attach-
ments."

"He should have read South's sermon on the
love of Christ to his disciples."

"It would have profited him much," replied
Everard; "I do not uphold Shaftesbury. He is
not a favourite with me; and, in this instance,
there is more malevolence than wisdom in what he
saith. The Messiah, both by precept and example,
cherished the growth of private affection, that is,
in all cases where it is not opposed to universal
benevolence. It does not behove a man to devote
himself exclusively to the interests of one beloved
individual. Jesus loved all men,—he loved his
disciples better than the community, and one better
than all the rest."

"And the fifth commandment," I replied, "is

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city.
hides,



wear sack-cloth, fast, pray, and apply the scourge, and all this to propitiate the Deity ; but do we thereby render ourselves so acceptable, as by manifesting our gratitude to the Creator, by doing good to the creature, whom God, as we are expressly told, made after his own image ? As in the ages of antiquity, they crowned with garlands the statues, and poured libations upon the altars, of their deities, so it becomes us to look upon our fellow-men as the statues and the altars of our Deity, and good-works ought to be unto us what the garlands and libations were to the ancients. Did you ever read that beautiful little apophthegm of Abon Ben Adhem and the angel ?”

I replied in the negative.

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Abon Ben Adhem stood first in the list of those men who loved their God."

"It is, indeed, beautiful," I said, "and worthy of a Christian writer. There is no religion which insists so much upon the efficacy of morality and benevolence as does the Christian religion. There are no doctrines so charitable as those of Jesus."

"And yet Christianity has been objected to, on the ground that it is not that which you declare it to be. Shaftesbury has hurled his lance at it, because, as he roundly asserts, it is positively inimical to the formation of all private attachments."

"He should have read South's sermon on the love of Christ to his disciples."

"It would have profited him much," replied Everard; "I do not uphold Shaftesbury. He is not a favourite with me; and, in this instance, there is more malevolence than wisdom in what he saith. The Messiah, both by precept and example, cherished the growth of private affection, that is, in all cases where it is not opposed to universal benevolence. It does not behove a man to devote himself exclusively to the interests of one beloved individual. Jesus loved all men,—he loved his disciples better than the community, and one better than all the rest."

"And the fifth commandment," I replied, "is

the only one in the decalogue, which has come down to us accompanied by a promise."

"And this is a moral commandment. What contentions have been, and will be, between the advocates of faith and good works. I, in my time, have had my share in these discussions. One thing I have almost universally observed, that the latter have the most toleration. Did you ever read any of the Fathers? I was turning over a volume of St. Augustine, the other day, when I alighted upon these words, the truth of which struck me very forcibly: 'Habere omnia sacramenta, et malus esse potest; habere autem caritatem, et malus esse non potest.' "

"There is a passage in my favourite South," I replied, "very much of a similar tendency, 'No man's religion,' saith this eloquent preacher, 'ever survives his morality.' "

"But will the converse of this hold good? I think not; but there are many zealots who are ready to declare that it will."

After this the conversation began to wear a more personal aspect. I drew Everard into speaking of himself. He was so little of an egotist, that this was at all times a difficult task. Upon the present occasion, however, I succeeded.

"I am scarcely four-and-twenty yet," said Everard, "and yet I almost feel as though I had

lived half a century. I am like Shelley's Prince Athanase—

‘ A youth, who as with toil and travel
Had grown quite weak and grey before his time.’

I have scarcely any of the feelings, and none of the passions of youth. I do not hunger after excitement, nor thirst after pleasure. I have no ambition. I never look forward or strive to rend the veil of futurity; at least, not for my own sake, though I sometimes think of my child, and endeavour to shadow forth in my imagination the destiny of the unconscious infant. I live almost wholly upon the past. There are few at my years to whom memory supplies more food than hope; but so it is with me; I am an old man,—a stricken, chastened, old man. But I am contented; I desire no change; I do not seek to be great, I only strive to be good.”

“ My dear Everard,” I said, and I felt quite sad as I spoke, “ you have suffered much, so have I. Your life has, as yet, been a scene of almost incessant struggles; your morning has been clouded and stormy, but your evening may be cheerful and serene.”

“ It may be serene,” interrupted Everard; “ but, believe me, it cannot be cheerful. The sun of my joy has set, alas! never to rise again.”

“And mine!”—There was a painful pause; our hearts were too full to speak.

At length I found words. “Everard,” I said, “in allusion to yourself, you, just now, quoted a passage from Shelley’s *Prince Athanase*. Do you know, I have often thought that there is much in that character which very strongly resembles your own. Do you remember these lines?

‘He had a gentle yet aspiring mind,
Just, innocent, with varied learning fed,
And such a glorious consolation find
In others’ joys, when all their own is dead.’

“Without assuming,” replied Everard, “to possess those good qualities which the two first lines of your quotation touch upon, I can bear testimony to the truth of what the latter verses contain. Who can ever be desolate when he has the power to do good?”

“No one; and you least of all; for you are always doing good,”

“I have dabbled a little upon the margin of the waters;” replied Everard; “but I have never yet lost sight of land,—the land of self, which humanity, even in its most generous exploits, will not suffer to fade away into the distance. I have not yet arrived at what Hartley calls ‘perfect self-annihilation.’”

"I think, if I mistake not," said I, "that Hartley distributes self-interest into three distinct classes, gross, refined, and rational. When a man ceases entirely to be selfish, his nature is made perfect. At the bottom of the cup of human life there must be some dregs. Earth clings to us; we are flesh and blood; the purity of a disembodied spirit cannot be expected from a thing of clay."

"As for myself," replied Everard, "I feel that I am essentially selfish. What you would call doing good to others, is, in reality, doing good to myself. When all the happiness one enjoys, is derived from the happiness of others, it is the immediate interest of that person to render those around him happy. He is like the captain of a ship, in a storm, who exerts himself to save his crew and his passengers,—knowing that, whilst ensuring their safety, he is also ensuring his own."

"Your humility, my dear Everard," I replied, "makes you deal somewhat largely in paradox. You would make it appear that the less selfish are the feelings, the more selfish are the actions of a man; that because your heart is pure, and your mind virtuous, every thing that you do must, of necessity, be vicious and impure. It is generally supposed, Everard, that a good tree beareth good fruit; and a corrupt tree corrupt fruit. Tried

by such a touch-stone must be imperfect."

"Well," said Everard spoke, "I believe that I am wrong. At least, I can demonstrate that I am selfish, which I am afraid of doing with our presence. Besides, it was but just is often, but Benevolence events I have contradicted what do you think of Hamlet of the final happiness of bases upon the benevolence the creation?"

"I am not capable of the subject," said I; glanced at them, I am with the writings of David not, he is high in your faith.

"He is. Until I reached were, nothing. My mind was satisfied. All beyond that there was a mystery which was an obscurity which my All my knowledge of a first degree vague and indefinite the misery which this pain

me into. Firmly believing, as I did, in the immortality of the soul, I could not reconcile this belief with the generally received opinion of the theologian concerning the immutability of rewards and punishments beyond the grave. I said to myself, 'God is infinitely good,—God is infinitely merciful. I discard whatever is opposed to this fundamental point of faith. But to punish finite sin with infinite misery is little compatible with the benevolence of an all-merciful Deity.' You cannot conceive the agony which there was in these reflections, Jerningham."

"Did you search the Bible?"

"I did. But, like Noah's dove, after a long and weary search, I returned again to the ark of my uncertainty, not having discovered a resting-place, or even plucked the olive-branch of hope. I could collect nothing positive from the scriptures upon this subject. I had no reason to play the casuist. I was living, or trying to live, according to Gospel rules. I was, moreover, in extreme affliction at the time. Earth had nothing to seduce me from heaven. It was my interest rather than otherwise to believe in a future state. I had no motives for perverting a single scriptural text. I read, but I was still perplexed. At length I alighted upon Hartley."

"And what saith that amiable philosopher?"

“‘It is probable that
mately be made happy.’
tion and the conclusive
I rejoiced; it was as if
had suddenly been ren
was at that time living
lazar-house of all impiet
every day, to go abroad i
promote health by exe
make observations upon
occupations of my spe
those observations! I m
I turned: the drunkard, t
lent man, and the p
heart with an indescrib
such thousands of my
sojourning a few years
damned after death. A
this constituted my cl
guess, then, what my jo
more cheering faith be
ness of my soul. I tho
conclusive.* I have ne

“ I will acquaint mys

“ They will repay y

* See Hartley's *Observation*
edit. 1791.

tinued Everard; "to me they were and ever will be an inexhaustible source of pleasant reflections. The idea of the soul's annihilation after death had been no less pregnant with misery than that of the ultimate condemnation of a large majority of my fellow-men. My mind was even as a vessel jammed in between two rocks. On either side I saw death. Oh, Jerningham! what was my delight when I beheld my bark sailing pleasantly along a free channel between the two."

"There are even now moments in my life," resumed Everard, after a brief pause, "when involuntary thoughts of the possibility of the soul's annihilation after death intrude themselves, fraught as they are with the most painful sensations. Such thoughts, however, are never otherwise than momentary. They are merely transitory shadows flitting over the broad sun-light of my entire conviction of an hereafter. When thinking of my poor Lucy, who has already been called to enjoy the eternity in which she so fully believed, a thought will sometimes rise up, a desolating, fearful thought,—'Oh! if there should be no world beyond the grave, then, indeed, my beloved one is *dead*.' Then my heart dies within me for a moment; yes, Jerningham, only for a moment. Again the sun of truth bursts out,—again is my soul made bright. I think that, after all, my Lucy has

only gone from me for a while; I look forward to a blessed re-union in brighter worlds to come; and even as men endeavour to heap up honour and riches, and other worldly advantages to render themselves more worthy of their living loves, so I, by striving with all my efforts to lay up treasure in heaven, seek to render myself worthy to enjoy the affections of my Lucy beyond the grave. I feel that the hour is not far off when we shall be united again."

"Say not so, Sinclair," I replied, "you are young and have many years yet to dwell among your fellow men, doing good to others and heaping up treasure for yourself. There is honour, and in store for you even in this world. You have genius, you have—"

"Hold, hold—I have told you that I have no ambition. I once began a work which I fondly hoped might outlive me. Day and night I poured over this work. You know the nature of this *magnum opus*. There was nothing in it which was likely to win for me much honour amongst men. It had for its aim the overthrow of all existing abuses. I concentrated all the energies of my intellect upon this work for upwards of two years. I had advanced some way; I said to myself, and turned over the pages I had written, 'Hoar custom beholding this, will tremble upon its tower—'

throne.' I looked along the vista of years, and I thought that I saw my work and the opinions inculcated therein, silently winning their way into the hearts and understandings of men. I did not expect to see, myself, the seeds which I was sowing spring up. I knew that the harvest was afar off; but I did not shrink from sowing because I could not live to look upon that harvest. Upon the night that my wife died, I made a great fire, and my book was converted into ashes."

"But, Everard, you have many years before you. The edifice which you have thrown down is easily to be built up again."

"Not so easily, Jerningham, believe me. My energy has gone from me. I am broken down. I have not the same powers of intellect that I possessed ere my wife died. Besides, I have not the heart to set about this work. Do you remember those touching sentences in Johnson's preface to his dictionary, I think that I could quote them, 'I may surely be contented,' saith he, speaking of the probable failure of his great work, 'without the praise of perfection, which, if I could obtain in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave,'"—and Everard buried his face in his hand, appa-

rently overwhelmed by misfortune that had befallen

"But still, Everard," motives for exertion; therefore you,—the good of y

"True," replied Everard, "I cannot calculate with any certainty how long I shall remain upon earth, even perhaps set about this with a painful pause—" but she tells me every hour of this is about soon to be ended, say, my dear Jerningham, a beautiful Scotch ballad,

'I'm wearing awa', Jol
I'm wearing awa' to th

My time is short, and this is thrown away upon a work not to complete. I must not make the problematical, nor—

"Stay, Everard," I interrupted my friend; "let me know what meaneth that strange

"Perhaps," said Everard, "and beholding the light that the gypsies are holding, and this is a fire they ha

“If all Egypt were to be assembled upon the common,” I replied, “they would not need such a fire as that.”

We rose up and went towards the window, which looked towards the common, from which the village derived its significant name of Heathfield.

The fire was at the opposite extremity of the common, at about the distance of half a mile from our house. It was a bright, red, towering, spreading fire, which emitted, every now and then, dense columns of black smoke. It was in fact a house, or a row of houses, in flames.

“Good heavens!” cried Everard, throwing open the window as he spoke; “there are a number of cottages on fire. Let us hasten towards the spot, that we may render all the assistance in our power to the luckless inhabitants of these flaming buildings.” And ere he had finished the sentence, Everard Sinclair stood upon the grass-plot which skirted that angle of my house.

“Come, Jerningham,” cried my friend. He needed not to repeat the summons, for, in a moment, I had jumped out of the window, and was standing beside him on the lawn.

“It is a dreadful fire,” said Everard,—“mark Jerningham, how it spreads. Already I hear a sound as of many voices commingled. Ought we not to have aroused the servants?”

“ We have no time to waste,” I replied, and we increased the rapidity of our speed. We ran straight onwards and crossed the common. We said nothing as we went, for, in truth, we were too breathless to speak.

We reached the spot. It was indeed a sight, at once fearful and sublime, which presented itself to our inquiring gaze. There was a row of some five or six cottages, of which the two central ones were already enveloped with fire. The flames were spreading in *both* directions, equally to the right and to the left; for the wind, which was somewhat high, from a quarter facing the houses, swept across the open common with a free and unimpeded current, whilst several stacks and buildings rearward of the burning cottages, intercepted its onward passage, and caused a sort of back current which increased the fire to an astounding degree. The flames had broken out in one of the lower rooms, a circumstance which very much enhanced the alarming aspect of affairs; for it is the nature of flames to rise upwards,—alas! for those who were dwelling above.

In addition to this, it was night.

The whole parish had been aroused. Almost every house for miles round was beginning to empty out its inhabitants. Some went forth to assist their neighbours, others to rob them, others

to look on: various are the motives, which induce people to be present at a large fire. All the ladders, and pails, and buckets in the village, had been put into requisition. There were the most adventurous at the top, the least adventurous at the bottom, of the ladders. They, whose activity was greater than their valour, employed themselves in pumping and carrying water. They, who were stout-hearted and despised danger, stationed themselves aloft and worked hard to unroof the cottages. Unfortunately the village of Heathfield did not possess such a thing as a fire-engine; one, however, had been sent for from B——.

It was a dreadfully busy sight. These cottages had been let out in small compartments to the poor of the village, and many people dwelt therein. There were to be seen the inhabitants of those rooms, which had not yet caught fire, thrusting their furniture out of window and out of doors. It was, in fact, nothing less than a row of houses disgorging itself. Beds, chairs, tables, chattels of every description were to be seen issuing, in admired confusion, forth from every aperture in the walls. There were cries, and lamentations, and wringings of hands,—paupers wailing over the loss of their property, quite beside themselves with fear. There was an old woman to be seen dragging forth a huge chest, which the withered arms

of the emaciated creature scarcely had the power of moving. I assisted her; the box was very light; it fell open; there was nothing in it but one solitary book, which, from its shape and thickness, I knew to be a Bible. "They were my son's," cried the aged woman, "he died at sea; this is all I have of him,"—and then she lifted up her voice in prayer and thanksgiving.

There were several ladders placed against the walls of the burning houses, with a man or two upon every step, so that they quite bent beneath the weight. Men at the feet of the ladders were serving water, which they handed one to another, in a long train formed for the purpose. It was just like a troop of ants climbing up the wall of a house. There were others trying, with all their might, to cut off the communication on either side, so as to prevent the fire from spreading any further. Some with mattocks, and some with crow-bars, exerting all their powers of destruction, to forestall the flames in the praiseworthy task of demolition, more from a certain innate love of mischief, than from any philanthropical motives. It was, in sooth, a comely bonfire, and it scorched the eyes in one's head painfully.

There was a strange babel of many voices: every one had some order to give,—every one had something to say. I passed by a little group of talkers,

and I heard one man say to another,—he was an old grey-haired man, and he leaped upon a thick staff,—he was one of the patriarchs of Heathfield, and I heard him say, “Ah ! you should have seen the great fire that there was in eighty-four, that burnt down fifteen houses at B——. Sure this is nothing to it,—a mere burning of weeds.”

“Ha, ha !” cried a woman, who had been for many years past on the brink of insanity, and whom the fearful events of this evening had made stark mad,—“ha, ha !—this is a goodly sight,—a furnace, a right regal one, fit for them who will not bend down to Baal. A brave sight is a great fire ; it warns one of what we shall have in the bottomless pit after death ! Burn,—burn,—burn !—fire is the goodliest of the elements.” This woman had been a gypsy, a prostitute, and now she was a maniac.

“By George !” exclaimed a little boy, “look at mad Bess : how she dances with her hair all loose ; one would think that she was dancing round a bonfire on the fifth of November or crownation day.”

“Poor creature !” said another boy, whose voice was milder than that of his companion,—“poor creature ! she is quite gone in the intellects. I wonder what has become of mother Hoton — she can’t move a peg, you know ; she has been bed-

rid these six years,—poor mother Hoton !” and the boy ran off to make inquiries in the crowd.

Presently I heard a voice, the tones of which I shall remember to my dying day—a woman’s voice full of the most unutterable anguish, and it cried out, “Oh ! my children—my children !—what will become of them ? There is no hope !” and the speaker wrung her hands with a gesture of the most heart-rending agony.

She was a widow. She had been watching all night by the bed-side of a sick friend, who dwelt at some distance from Heathfield ; and had returned only to see the walls of her cottage girt around with fire, and to know that her fatherless children were doomed to perish in the flames.

“Oh, save them ! save them !” she shrieked, “I am a lone woman ; I have none to help me. They are in that room ;” and she stretched out her arm ; but no man durst enter. “Oh, save them ! save them !” she continued to shriek, and Everard Sinclair heard her. He knew the woman, for she was poor, and a widow.

“Where are they ?” he asked.

She pointed to a certain window ; but she could not utter another word. It was a piteous thing to see her ; the red light fell upon her countenance, and it was expressive of the most utter hopelessness.

I looked round. Everard was gone ! A dreadful thought flashed across my brain. Where was he ? I went to seek him in the crowd.

Presently, I beheld a ladder reaching up to the very window which the poor woman had just indicated. The red flames burst in huge sheets from that window. The room in which the poor children slept, was in fact a large furnace. I looked up, and I caught a glimpse of a young man at the summit of the ladder. He was bare-headed ; his coat was off, and the sleeves of his shirt drawn up. The light from the window streamed glaringly upon the yellow hair of the adventurer, and made it glitter like burnished gold.

It was Everard. My heart stood still. His foot was upon the ledge of the window. I cried out with a loud voice, but I was unheard, for the next moment he had entered the flaming room. I prepared to follow him. I ascended, and ascending I beheld a shadow pass across the inner wall of the apartment. Again, I lifted up my voice ; but again I was unheard ; I continued to ascend the ladder, and had already reached mid-way, when I heard a terrific crash. The floor of the room had fallen in, and with it — oh God ! that I should have the power to write of these things ! — Everard Sinclair, the young, the brave, the sacri-

facial fell also — he died, as he had lived, for his neighbour.

I know not what passed after this. They found next morning three blackened and mutilated corpses. There was the body of a young man amongst the ashes, with a little child clasped in either arm.

CHAPTER X.

Though I cannot talk to a woman like your worship,
And use my phrases and my learned figures,
Yet I can fight with any man.

Fie.

I can, sir,

And I will fight.

BEAUMONT and FLETCHER.

A FEW weeks subsequently to the date of that lamentable occurrence, which cut off the dearest, the most devoted, and I may add the only *real* friend I ever possessed in my life, I had occasion, very much against my will, to absent myself, for two or three days, from my home and my suffering wife. Ellen was now the only tie which bound me to this sepulchral earth,—I am wrong; I had two children, Everard's infant and my own.

I returned to Heathfield early one morning. It

was the month of July, and as I was an early riser, I had ridden from London and passed the threshold of my house some time before my usual breakfast hour. Despite my many misfortunes, the long matutinal ride had given me a prodigious appetite.

When I entered the breakfast-room, not having encountered upon my passage through the hall any of my domestics, who might have forewarned me of this untimely visit, I was much surprised to see a gentleman, whose person was quite unfamiliar to me, lounging upon one of the sofas, and turning over with a negligent air the pages of a new magazine, which he was either too lazy, or too modest to cut.

I looked at him, with an aspect of astonishment which presently gave way to curiosity ; for people who have mixed much with their fellows soon cease to be surprised at any thing. I took in his person at a glance. The upper segment of his frame was accoutred in a blue frock coat with brass buttons and a standing collar, whilst his lower limbs wantoned at large in a pair of white jean pantaloons, whose ample dimensions reminded me of the *pejammahs*, I used to wear in India, and which, coupled with the blue frock-coat, told me at once, that their inhabitant was a sailor.

He was a young man, apparently about four-and-

twenty years of age, with a fine open countenance, rather delicate than masculine, blue eyes, yellow hair, and a beautiful complexion, which exposure had in no degree impaired. He was not tall, neither was he stout, but his figure was compact and well-knit, betokening both strength and activity in no ordinary degree. The whole appearance of the stranger was exceedingly prepossessing; he bore a strong resemblance to my wife, and if I had not known to the contrary, I should have taken him for Ellen's brother, there was such a strong likeness between the two.

The stranger rose as I entered, and letting his book fall to the ground, he advanced towards me, and saying, as he approached, "Mr. Jerningham, I presume," he put into my hand a card, whereon was written the name of *Albert Hervey*.

"So," thought I, within myself, "this is the young gentleman whom I remember having had the pleasure of beating about fifteen years ago;—my wife's cousin, and my rival." I was unaffectedly glad to see him.

I extended my hand; there was a frankness in my manner, and a sincerity in the tones of my voice as I said, "Welcome to Heathfield; you have spent many pleasant days in this village, Mr. Hervey; and I hope that you will spend a few more beneath the same roof with your cousin:—

at least, Ellen and I will make them pleasant, though a house of mourning, as :

The young sailor smelt unutterable contempt. He drew back ; he would not look at me again. His fine expression. It was anger that wore a mask of the most insolent

"No, sir, no ;" he exclaimed in a voice, which he vainly tried to make calmly supercilious.—"I do not bandy compliments with you ; let us have no soft speeches here on a visit of condolence ; come here to claim your share of the plunder ; come here, for—for"—he could not guess, pretty well, what I meant by Mr. Jerningham."

I was astounded. It was not that the young sailor was drunk ; my third, my fourth, began to catch a glimmer of sense ;—I have ironed no coward ;—I have ironed been heartily ashamed of myself if I had not exhibited my indignation as did Mr. Albert Hervey in

Though no older than my opponent, I was more practised;—I had a cooler judgment, a stronger mind, and courage which, if not more daring, was, at all events, more firm. Albert Hervey was no match for me now, no more than he had been when a child. I felt my superiority; his was the impotent choler of a rash and ill-guided boy;—mine was the calm equanimity,—the vigorous self-possession of a man. Yet I did not like to crush my enemy. I looked at him; I would much rather have opened my arms to embrace him. I know not how it was, but, at the very moment that he was insulting me, my heart yearned towards him, and I felt an irresistible longing to be beloved by this young man. Perhaps it was that he was so like my wife. I can account for it in no other way.

“Will Mr. Albert Hervey,” I said, in a calm voice, “be so good as to explain himself more fully;” and, drawing a chair towards him, I motioned him to be seated; and then, taking up my position upon another, I looked earnestly into the face of my companion.

The extreme coolness which I exhibited embarrassed the young sailor. He seated himself, and endeavouring to conceal his confusion, he rendered it all the more apparent. He was much puzzled for an exordium; he did not exactly know the

precise manner in which it behoved him to open his proceedings. After a pause, during which he scrutinized with a searching eye the countenance of my opponent, he began—

“When we were boys, Mr. Jerningham, some ten or fifteen years ago, we fought; it was in the garden, if I mistake not, of this very house.”

I looked upwards with the air of a man who was endeavouring to recollect something; and, tapping my forehead gently with three fingers, I replied, “Ah! so we did; and, if I remember rightly, you came off *second best*, Mr. Hervey. Heigho!” and I heaved a deep sigh. “Those were pleasant times; were they not?—But you were going to say something; we fought, and you were worsted. Well, sir?”

The young sailor bit his lip, and his countenance became livid with ill-suppressed wrath. His eyes flashed; but when they caught my glance, they were instantly lowered. There was something calm, yet so stern in my aspect at that moment that the brave but inexperienced youth who confronted me felt abashed, and, in spite of himself, he tacitly acknowledged my superiority. It was wisdom rebuking anger;—a painter would have been glad of such a model.

Albert Hervey endeavoured to meet me with my own weapons; but he failed. He could neither

command the muscles of his face, nor modulate the tones of his voice; so that the look and accents, which he intended to be the representatives of a dignified composure, in reality betokened nothing else but impotent irascibility. However, to do him justice, he betrayed no symptom of fear.

“Well,” he said, “it does not matter. We fought;—it was about my cousin. I loved her then; I am a rough sailor; I am a man of few words, Mr. Jerningham; I love her now, better than any living creature, though she is your wife, sir. But this is nothing:—you have ill-treated her; you have made her your wife only to insult her. In short, sir, I have come here to tell you that you are no better than a brute.”

“Vastly fine!—This may be all very well in the gun-room, or on the quarter-deck; but”—then I checked myself suddenly;—“you are a foolish, hot-headed boy, and do not seem to know what you say.”

Albert started from his seat:—“Look you, Mr. Jerningham,” he cried; and he clenched his fist as he spoke, though he did not lift up his hand; “I have come here purposely to insult you; and, perhaps, I have already said enough.”

“Upon my word, sir, these are strange proceedings. If you have come here purposely to insult me, I think that it would have been equally

well if you had deferred the honour of your call until, sir,—until I had breakfasted.”

“What, sir?—”

“Resume your seat, and listen to me. I am not, as you see, much distempered by what you have said. I am naturally slow to wrath. Perhaps you will say that my forbearance is only another name for cowardice. Look at me; tell me, candidly, whether my aspect is that of a coward. Is my cheek pale? Do my limbs tremble? Does my voice falter? Is there any want of arrangement in the words which I use to express my sentiments? In short, do you see any thing about me, which warrants a supposition that I am at this moment the victim of fear?”

Albert Hervey made no answer. But his silence was a sufficient reply.

“Now,” I continued, “being fully convinced that, in the sincerity of your heart, you do not believe that I am acting under the influence of fear, I will venture to confess, and I speak sincerely, that I would much rather see you, Mr. Hervey, seated at that table, and breaking the bread of amity beneath my roof, than I would listen to the gratuitous insults which you have come here purposely to put upon me. Reflect, sir: I offer you my friendship, with a full assurance

that you will find it a more valuable possession than my enmity. What you have already said, I will forget, and seek no apology for the words which, I think, in your calmer moments, you will repent of ever having uttered."

This address, conciliatory as it was, served rather to enhance, than to assuage, the inward wrath of my irritated opponent; but it manifestly had the effect of quieting his external vehemence. He appeared sensible of the advantages with which my calmness invested me, and though that calmness irritated him beyond anything, he still tried to imitate it; but he could not.

"Mr. Jerningham," he said, "I am ready to confess that in this strife of words, I am no match for you. I cannot talk as you do; I never could: in this you have always had the advantage over me. I remember that, when a boy, I used to say, 'If I could but talk like Claude Jerningham, I should—' But no matter what; these retrospections are idle. Suffice it, sir, that all the subtlety of your eloquence is entirely thrown away upon me,—that I have not come here to chop logic, but to deal with you honestly, man to man, after a plain straight-forward fashion. All this rhetoric may do well enough at St. Stephens, but if you think that I am to be set aside with a few soft words of con-

cooled irony, Mr. Jerry self infernally mistakes purposely to insult you.

"So you say. I applaud the wisdom or pose; but no matter. that you had better put *sit down to breakfast*. ship?"

"No."

"Then to business."

"I would ask you a of a gentleman, have wife?"

"The honour of a called upon as a witness on a ordinary occasion. By what to question a husband which he is pleased to wife?"

"Look you, Mr. Jerry. I am the cousin, relative of your most unfortunate"

"You are not, sir. I"

"True: but that fact therefore, not a *fighting* can you understand me:" volumes. The whole art of

“Not at all, sir,” I replied; “you are mistaken if you think that I understand you; for I must confess that, to me at least, your conduct is altogether incomprehensible. Is a husband obliged to render an account of his actions to all the relatives of his wife?”

“I don’t know what he is obliged to do. You have ill-treated your wife. That wife, sir, is my cousin. I love her as though she were my sister. I am an orphan; and she, who has the misfortune to be your wife, is dearer to me than the whole world,—than my existence,—even than my honour.”

“Well, sir,”—and, in spite of his insolence, my heart yearned towards the young sailor at that moment. There was something in the conduct of this hot-headed boy, ill-judged, intemperate, and extravagant as it was, which appeared noble and disinterested in my eyes, and which, though I heartily regretted, I could not altogether reprehend. Some men would have attributed the behaviour of Albert Hervey to malice; I attributed it to generosity. I was never more ready in my life to forgive a person who had insulted me. I was willing to bear with the taunts and reproaches of my exasperated cousin. Every time that I looked into his face, I thought of my poor Ellen, and I became gentle as a lamb. If he had not resembled my

wife. I should have knocked him down long before this.

“Well, sir,” continued the young sailor, “it is no use to soften down my phrases. I hate you. It is not that I envy you; it is not that you have married the woman whom I have loved, none can tell how deeply. If you had made her happy, I should have blessed you; yes, sir, indeed I should. But, instead of this,—now listen to my words, and tell me whether I have not reason to hate you. About two years since, I was appointed to a vessel, and I went abroad. I left Ellen; she was full of health and happy as the day was long. She has always regarded me with kindness, and I hoped that, some day, that kindness would ripen into love. I heard your name mentioned, Mr. Jerningham, and I rejoiced, because they told me you were in India. I sailed. The vessel, which I was posted to, went to the Cape and to Calcutta. At the latter place I inquired for you, and I learnt, to my inexpressible mortification, that you had already returned to England. Well, sir, in process of time, we also returned. I was full of hope;—our ship was paid off; and I prepared immediately for a visit to my uncle and my beloved cousin. What I have found, sir, you know well enough. Ellen is your wife: but this is nothing; I could have borne this with tranquillity; for I knew that

my poor cousin loved you with all the fervour of her affectionate soul. But,—I need scarcely continue—you know the rest. My cousin is dying: you have killed her. You are no better than a brute. Oh, sir! if she had been my wife, I should have loved her and treated her kindly. Though I had been able to do nothing else, I should have lavished on her the fondness of a loving heart. Though I had neither riches nor reputation, I should have bestowed on her kind words and gentle treatment: I should have protected her. Hark you, sir, you speak of cowardice: I tell you that you are the grossest of cowards,—you have insulted a weak, confiding woman,—you have trampled upon, and—and—and—you have *killed her.*” And large heavy tears, which he in vain struggled to suppress, rolled down the fair cheeks of the young sailor.

Verily, he had his revenge; what I suffered at that moment no words can describe.

But still I retained my self-possession—“Did Ellen tell you this?” I said.

“No, sir; and this it is which makes your villainy a thousand times worse; your wife is an angel of forgiveness; I saw her yesterday, and though death is written in legible characters upon her waxen face, and though I know, sir, that this is your doing, she says that she is

very happy, and that you are the kindest of husbands."

"And what reason has Mr. Albert Hervey for thinking that his cousin has deceived him?"

"I have been to Norfolk—I have seen her parents ;—my aunt, sir, my aunt tells me that you have behaved unto her daughter like a brute."

"And you believed your aunt rather than your cousin?"

"No, sir,—I then resolved that I would defer my judgment until I had heard the statements of a *third person*. That third person is yourself. I have asked, and received no answer. I have accused you, and you have not defended yourself."

"I have not defended myself! Was ever yet a man, with one spark of courage in his breast, bullied into disavowing a charge of this extraordinary nature? Look at me ;—do I wear the appearance of a man who is to be bullied into an acknowledgment of any kind?"

"I pay no regard to appearances," replied the sailor, raising his voice, and looking at me with a threatening aspect: "I confess that both your manner and your language are those of a brave man, and what is more, of an innocent one. But actions are more significant than either words or looks—you understand me ; I have called you several times a brute ; I have also called you a coward and

murderer ; but you look at me with a quiet eye, and address me in a calm voice. What am I to think of this ? If words cannot move you, perhaps blows will be equally unsuccessful," and as he said this, he clenched his fist, and whilst his eyes flashed, and his whole countenance became livid with passion, he struck me, not violently, but with a most insulting gesture, upon the chest.

Human endurance has its limits ; the strongholds of my patience, besieged as they were, could offer no further resistance. But I controlled myself for a few moments : " Enough : " I said in a calm voice, and having taken a card from a Chinese box, which was standing upon a marble-slab in the room, I wrote upon it *Oriental Club House*, and threw it towards my hot-headed cousin.

He stooped to pick it up, and was preparing to depart, when I checked him,—“A word before you go ;—let my wife know nothing of what has passed between us ?”

“ It will be your business, sir,” replied the sailor, “ to keep her in ignorance of this, for I shall never pass your threshold again—never—‘ We shall meet at Philippi.’ ”

“ Stay a moment ;—said you not just now, that you would never pass my threshold again ? You shall not, sir,” and I laid my hands upon his shoulder. We were standing by an open window ;

I could not resist the temptation held out to me plentifully on the precipitous edge of water, direct at that moment, attract

" You shall never cry for you shall go out of

And having said this the sailor, not lovingly, in a strong and irresistible humorous manner, in such a manner, that his words were useless; he struggled, but in vain, for I held him as firm as a tightened rope for a moment—it was as if his teeth were clenched, his eyes, the natural expression of soft, burned like his own, he threw himself out fearfully. I held him like a baby in my arms; he was not off the ground; I raised him, and, summoning all my effort, I threw him—I drew him out of the window.

I heard a splash, and did not look at my prospect aloud, and drew down

I rang the bell—"Wilson," said I, "if *that sailor gentleman*, who came here this morning, applies again for admittance, eject him; and, hark you, Wilson, take the gentleman his hat; you will find him somewhere or other *rolling about the lawn*; and when you have done that, Wilson, you may *bring my breakfast*."

When I had despatched my meal, I repaired immediately to the chamber of my sick wife.—"Ellen," I said, "once more, I am compelled to quit you, my love; I have other business in London to-day; but very likely it will be the *last*, therefore, you must console yourself with this reflection: it will be all over to-morrow."

"Do you think that you shall be home to breakfast?" asked Ellen, in an endearing voice.

"To breakfast,—why that, my love, *depends upon circumstances*," I replied.

"By the bye," I continued, "you have had a visit since I saw you last, Ellen."

"Oh, yes!" rejoined my wife, in tones of unaffected joy, "my cousin, Albert, has been here; have you seen him?" Then she added coaxingly, "I hope, Claude, that you will be very civil to my poor cousin, for he is an orphan."

"And, therefore, I know how to feel for him; oh, yes! I will be very civil."

“But, have you seen him, my love? He said that he would be here early this morning.”

“I have seen him. He is a very nice young man, and very much like you, Ellen.”

“Do you think so? I am glad of that. Then you will promise to be very kind to my cousin.”

“Oh! yes; very. By the bye, perhaps, my friend ***, who is in the Admiralty, might procure his promotion.”

Ellen's pale face glistened with an expression of gratitude and joy. “You are, indeed, a kind-hearted creature,” she exclaimed. “How happy I am in such a husband. How truly thankful I ought to be;” and, as she said this, she threw her arms around my neck, and kissed my burning forehead, which felt at that moment as though “Luke's iron crown” were encircling it.

I spent several hours in the sick-chamber of my wife, and then having mounted my horse, I set out for London.

There is nothing in the whole world so good for a man who is bent upon a dangerous undertaking, as a brisk ride upon a spirited animal, especially when the sun shines and there is an invigorating freshness in the atmosphere. Nothing equally with this dispels our gloomy forebodings; nothing is more cheering, nothing more animating. For my part, I would never go into a battle except

as a mounted officer. A coward upon foot is often a hero upon horseback. Sometimes, though the converse of this is to be met with, I know some men who would much rather face the enemy than bestride a spirited horse.

"But, have you seen
that he would be here

"I have seen him
man, and very much

"Do you think
you will promise

"Oh! my
friend ***

his promise

Ell

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CHAPTER XI.

My miseries,

As in a glass present me the rent face
Of an unguided youth.

FORD.

I RODE at once to * * * Square, where Lord Leicester was then residing. I knew nobody more fit than my old school-fellow to take care of my honour, and to see that I was put to death in the regular way of business. It is some consolation upon these occasions to feel that one has a friend.

I found his Lordship at home.—"Leicester," I said, and there was a gaiety in the tones of my voice, which, after all, was not very artificial, for, in truth, I was but little terrified by the prospects

of approaching danger; "Leicester, I stand in need of your assistance, being involved—"

"*Involved*, my dear Jerningham," interrupted my friend with an air of astonishment, which made me laugh. "You involved! we shall hear next that Lord G—— is a beggar, and Jew R——, a bankrupt. By Jupiter! you cannot be serious," and Leicester looked unwontedly grave.

I was highly amused. "I certainly do not mean that I have any pecuniary embarrassments: the fact is, my dear Leicester, that a hot-heated young sailor, who has the honour to be a cousin of my wife, having taken it into his head to insult me, I took it into mine, *par consequent*, to eject him this morning out of a window, which was fortunately upon the ground-floor, or the lower deck, as he would have called it. Now, little *désagréments* of this kind are best settled out of hand; my friend seems to cherish an exorbitant desire of shooting, or being shot by, your humble servant. God only knows how willing I was to spare the boy. He called me a brute, I said nothing; a coward, I did not retort; a murderer, I was patient as a lamb. He struck me, and I threw him out of window. Now, Leicester, you must do me the favour of settling the *when* and the *where* for your friend."

To my great astonishment Leicester did not laugh: he did not even so much as smile. I ex-

pected that a burst of merriment would have followed the completion of my story; but Leicester was in no mood for laughter. I looked at him, and there was an expression of thoughtful despondency in his face which was quite unusual. The sun-joyous look, which was always wont to animate his fine countenance, had entirely gone from him. He was sad. It was too evident that there was a weight of anguish pressing heavily upon his heart.

“My dear Jerningham,” he said, and there was that in the tones of his voice which accorded with the aspect of his face; “I am sorry, very sorry indeed, that I cannot oblige you in this instance. You must apply to somebody else. To speak truth, I am critically situated; nothing but the most urgent necessity could ever drive me to withhold my compliance from what you have just asked at my hands. The fact is, that to-morrow morning, I—I—I *am engaged*.”

“*Engaged*,—why, you don’t mean to say that you have a little affair of your own on hand at the moment. If you have, we will go together, and officiate mutually for one another.”

“You are mistaken, Jerningham,—I am going to fight; would to God that there was nothing worse than a duel in store for me to-morrow!”

"Nothing worse,—why, what is the matter? You alarm me. Are you going to be hanged?"

"Worse, still,—*I am going to be married,*" and he struck his forehead with the gesture of a madman.

Never was the human voice expressive of more intolerable anguish than was Leicester's, when, in the extremity of his desolation, he cried out, "*I am going to be married!*" It was a regular Greek tragedy cry,—the most heart-rending that ever was uttered. It said plainly enough, *απολωλα!* or, *I am utterly undone.*

As for myself, I was thunderstruck. If Leicester had informed me that he had turned saint, I could not have been more astounded. "Married!" I exclaimed, "and to whom? *Nunquam vidi vultum minus nuptialem,* as Erasmus saith. By the torch of Hymen! I must don the marriage garment, and put aside the armour of war. But jesting apart, my dear Leicester, are you really about to perpetrate the rash action of which you speak?"

"I am."

"And will you allow me to ask the name of the future Lady Leicester?"

"Miss ***, " and as he uttered the name, the face of my poor friend was crimsoned to the very forehead.

“Miss *** !” I absolutely screamed, “what, Miss ***, *the actress*? Are you mad?”

“*I have been*, Jerningham; you feel for me, do you not? By G—, it is too true. I am a lost man; my only hope is, that I may die before the morrow. Jerningham, only think that I should marry that infernal ——!” and he used a word, which, however coarse, was, alas! the most appropriate epithet that could be applied to the future Lady Leicester.

I forgot my own troubles immediately. Albert Hervey and his insults passed away from my mind. What was the prospect of an ordinary duel to that of the absolute ruin which was impending over my poor friend? Leicester was a drowning man; I beheld him sinking, and it behoved me to exert all my energies that I might rescue him from a fate a thousand times more terrible than death.

“Leicester,” I exclaimed, “this must not be. Thank God that I have come hither in time to save you, my friend. Let what will happen, you must break off this match.”

“I cannot; it is too late. I have promised. She has it in writing. Every thing is appointed for to-morrow. Besides, she is with child; and if I do not marry her, she swears by all that is holy, she will action me in the public courts. This would be still worse, Jerningham. As it is, I shall

only be scouted as a fool, and cast out of all decent society; but if I do not marry the girl, I shall be held up before the whole world as a profligate, a liar, and a scoundrel. I shall become 'a world's wonder,' the butt of every newspaper writer, the hero of every brothel, the contempt of every good man. The very thought of such a thing is insupportable," and he laid his head upon the table, and groaned piteously.

"Is there no alternative?"

Leicester did not answer; but he slowly lifted up his head, and for a few moments he appeared to be absorbed in profound thought. Presently his countenance brightened up. It was a ray of sunshine bursting through a fog. A cheering thought had flashed across his brain. "Are you a good shot, Jerningham?" he asked.

"Very fair, I could hit an elephant at the distance of ten yards, or the duchess of —, at forty. But why do you ask this question; let us think of your own affairs."

"I *am* thinking of them. Do you think that you could contrive to *kill your man*, to-morrow morning?"

"God forbid! I have no ambition to be a murderer. Besides, the man is my wife's cousin."

"So much the better. One's wife's cousins are always best out of the way. Cousins are privi-

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"I have seen him. He is a very nice young man, and very much like you, Ellen."

"Do you think so? I am glad of that. Then you will promise to be very kind to my cousin."

"Oh! yes; very. By the bye, perhaps, my friend ***, who is in the Admiralty, might procure his promotion."

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I spent several hours in the sick-chamber with my wife, and then having mounted my horse, I rode out for London.

There is nothing in the whole world so good as a man who is bent upon a dangerous undertaking, as a brisk ride upon a spirited animal, especially when the sun shines and there is an invigorating freshness in the atmosphere. Nothing equal to this dispels our gloomy forebodings; nothing is more cheering, nothing more animating. In my part, I would never go into a battle except

as a mounted officer. A coward upon foot is often a hero upon horseback. Sometimes, though the converse of this is to be met with, I know some men who would much rather face the enemy than bestride a spirited horse.

be mine, and the estates are mortgaged so deeply that I could not raise another sixpence upon them to save my life or my reputation. Oh! that I had never handled a cue, or looked upon that cursed *rouge et noir* table! The wealth of the whole Indies is nothing to a man when a gambling devil has taken possession of his soul."

"Then you have not wherewithal to compromise this unfortunate business."

"No;"—and in that little monosyllable there was a world of agony and desolation.

"Tell me," I said, "the exact sum which the extortionate woman requires. Perhaps, after all, my dear Leicester, this is not such a very hopeless case."

"I am afraid it is. The cursed horse-leech demands no less than twenty thousand pounds. Half of it to be settled upon herself, the other half upon the child that is in her womb, and, after all, (this is the agony of the thing,) I am by no means certain that the unborn infant is my own. Oh! Leicester, Leicester! that ever thou shouldst have been such a fool!"

"Twenty thousand pounds!"

"Yes, and I am terribly involved. My pecuniary affairs are so entangled, that when I endeavour to look into them my mind goes almost distracted. There is such a labyrinth! Theseus

as a mounted officer. A coward upon foot is often a hero upon horseback. Sometimes, though the converse of this is to be met with, I know some men who would much rather face the enemy than bestride a spirited horse.

rosity I cannot consent to profit by it; no, Jerningham, you have other claims, you have a wife and family, and many friends, much more deserving of this kindness than a ruined spendthrift like myself."

In reality I fully estimated the sincerity with which Lord Leicester declined to accept my proffered bounty. I gave him credit for the best intentions, though I pretended, as a matter of expediency, to think that his real motives were very different from his ostensible ones. "If Lord Leicester," I said, and there was a rebukeful severity in the artificial tones of my voice; "cannot bear to be beholden to one whom he has known since his early boyhood, it is a proof that there are some natures which are more generous in giving than in receiving; and that benevolence is sometimes nothing more than the minister of pride. Do you know, Leicester, that a great mind exhibits itself as much in its readiness to receive, as to confer an obligation. But setting this aside, the benefit is mutual. Perhaps, if it were to be weighed fairly, I should be found to have derived the greatest measure of happiness from the arrangement I have made. Let us change places for a moment. If I were on the brink of a precipice would you not willingly part with this sum to save me from inevitable perdition; and would you not

be unutterably distressed if I were to say to you, 'I applaud your generosity, but I cannot condescend to profit by it?' There, take the money; and that you may not think that the obligation I have conferred on you is so weighty as to be altogether insupportable, know, firstly, that if I were to write an order for five times that amount I should still be possessed of a competency; and, secondly, that by giving me your note of hand, promising to repay me *sine die*, you will be able to regard yourself merely in the light of a borrower, my dear Leicester. And, d—n it, the man who, like yourself, has borrowed money from half the Jews in London, need not blush to accept a loan from the oldest friend he possesses in the world. So now no more words, but let us start at once for the *Oriental*, or my friend, Albert Hervey, will think that I have less valour than discretion."

Leicester rose from his seat, and grasping my hand with a fervour which repaid me amply for all that I had done, he poured forth a torrent of grateful eloquence from the over-brimming chalice of his heart. "You do not know half," he said, "of what you have done for me, my friend. You have rescued me from the clutches of this vile Jezebel, and have placed it in my power, even now, at the eleventh hour, to become a better man. Jerningham, I have been playing the fool

exceedingly for many years past. Perhaps evil habits have taken root so deeply in my constitution that I shall find it difficult to weed them out; but I will try; I will put my shoulder to the wheel, and exert all my energies to extricate this floundering vehicle from the slough of profligacy in which it has been immersed in of late. The first step along the path of regeneration, which I intend to take is—to marry."

"To marry! why, I was hoping that, at these events, you had escaped that calamity. You were no sooner out of one fire than you rush headlong into another. Are you mad? Rightly saith the Roman '*Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*'"

"No; no, Jerningham, you mistake,—'I am not mad, most noble Festus.' The benefit which you have conferred upon me is much greater than you suppose. You have rescued me from a burning fiery furnace to plunge me into the Pool of Bethesda. I shall be made whole by matrimony as cripple as I have been for many years past."

"I congratulate you, Leicester," I returned laughing, "upon this accession of scriptural knowledge. 'Tis something new: you have never been long possessed of this biblical information."

"The sick man resorts to the physician," replied Leicester, "and the mind may be bruised and broken equally with the body, Jerningham."

Non sum qualis eram. Of course you will dine with me to-day."

"*Volontiers*; but tell me, Leicester, who is the guardian angel presiding over your pool of Bethesda. I am very curious to know whether you are an object of envy or of commiseration."

"My guardian angel is a friend of thine, Jerningham. She is one too, whom I have long loved, though vainly, as it proved, for some years. You smile. Believe me, my friend, that in the very midst of all my unchaste desires, I have cherished the pure flame of one hallowed affection. I am not deceiving you. One holy love, like a rose-tree blossoming in a wilderness, has grown up in my heart of hearts, unsullied by the rude contact of my many contaminating lusts. Yes, Jerningham, believe me, I have loved, and do still love, with all the strength of my soul, the beautiful virgin-widow—the incomparable *Lady Jaspar Jerdan*."

"Lady Jaspar Jerdan! Do you call it holy to love another man's wife?"

"She is a widow. Sir Jaspar is dead. He died in December last. The first frost after his marriage was the death of him."

"I am aware of that. But Lady Jaspar Jerdan has not always been a widow."

"Nor has she always been Lady Jaspar Jerdan."

I have known her for several years, though she is now scarcely eighteen ; and I would have married her, before the old Baronet had put in his claims, but that Poroon, who you know was her brother, happened to be too well acquainted with the profligate tenour of my ways. Sir Charles had one virtue ; he was doatingly fond of his sister, and, though, as I really believe, he liked me better than any man in England, he would not give his consent that I should become the husband of his favourite. ‘ No, no, Leicester,’ he said, ‘ you are a devilish good fellow in your way, but I know you too well to believe that you are likely to make my sweet sister happy.’ In vain I protested that I would reform,—that I would eschew the vanities of the world, and go into holy orders if that would reconcile his conscience. Poroon was inflexible ; and in spite of my disappointment I could not help applauding his honesty. ‘ But she loves me,’ I cried in an agony of despair. ‘ I know it,’ replied Poroon. ‘ She will never be happy without me,’ said I. ‘ She will never be happy with you,’ said Sir Charles. And thus the transaction was ended.”

“ And you think that the widow will have you ? ”

“ Undoubtedly,” replied Leicester, “ and she has five thousand a-year.”

“ Then I *will* congratulate you ; but now let us

be off, without loss of time, to the *Oriental*. By the bye, my horses are at the door; we may as well dismount Watson and send him *au pied* to the Club-house. I should like you to bestride that beast; it is a new purchase, and I think a very good one."

"I am quite ready," replied Leicester, "and we will call upon * * *, on our way, to tell her that she may sing 'Willow,' and cut up her marriage garments to make baby-frocks withal."

"We will call there upon our way home," said I, "for I doubt not but that I have already been inquired after, and found wanting, at the *Oriental*."

All duels are pretty much alike. For the most part, in historical works of this nature, they go off with an uncommon degree of flatness. They are dull enough in the action, and ten times more dull in description. A leaden monotony pervades them. Oh! for the old times of jousts, tourneys, and ladies' favours.

I had no idea of firing in the air, when mine enemy had taken the unwarrantable liberty of bearding me in my own breakfast-room. This was a stretch of generosity beyond me: besides, I was an excellent pistol-shot, and I did not like to neglect such an opportunity of exhibiting my qualifications in this line. We met somewhere

near Fulham. The effect of my first shot was such, that I had no occasion for another. It splintered the *radius*, or one of the lower bones of my enemy's right arm. The ball came in close with the fated member just as its unfortunate proprietor was lowering it, after having discharged his pistol very unsuccessfully at my head.

Poor Albert Hervey! He never went to work again. He was a cripple to the end of his days.

CHAPTER XII.

Thou art in thy religion an atheist,—in thy condition a cur,—in thy diet an epicure,—in thy lust a goat,—in thy sleep a hog;—thou tak'st upon thee the habit of a grave physician, but art, indeed, an imposterous empiric.

FORD'S *Lover's Melancholy*.

How fares thee, lady ?

Dead !

Dead !

FORD'S *Broken Heart*.

“THEN there is no hope, Doctor,” I said,—“no glimmering of hope. Your patient must die, Doctor, eh ? Oh ! horror of horrors !”

Reader, I was alluding to my wife, and *not* to poor Albert Hervey, who was going on very well with the stump of his right arm, and a pension, which I, with a generosity much exceeding that of ‘the country,’ which only rewards those who fight *for* her, had settled upon the young sailor

for fighting *against* me, in the true spirit of Christian charity. One has no right to splinter a man's arm without paying him handsomely for his loss.

But to do the young sailor justice, he was not one whose wounds were to be healed by the application of a golden ointment. He was a youth of infinite spirit, and scorned to be beholden to his enemy. Yet he was not implacable; on the contrary, his nature was gentle, generous, and forgiving; but the gentlest when they are roused to anger, are wont to be the most violent, and Albert Hervey having once encouraged the belief that I was ill-treating his cousin, hated me with a vehemence of hatred quite foreign to the kindliness of his disposition. What that hatred caused him to do, and what it caused him to suffer, has already found a record in these pages.

But Albert Hervey having insulted me,—having bearded me, and having fought with me, was satisfied. He conceived that he had done all that it behoved him to do upon this occasion,—and when he thought of the forbearance which I had exercised towards him, of his cousin Ellen's repeated declarations of my kindness, and of Mrs. Hervey's malicious disposition, which he himself was well acquainted with, to his cost; he began to think that he had been too intemperate,—that he had gone to work in a threatening, ruthless, manner,

which little became him, and one regret naturally giving birth to another, at length he entertained a full conviction that he had been acting unworthily all along. The sick-chamber is the place of all others to foster reflections of this nature; and one day,—for I never neglected my diurnal visit to the lodgings of the wounded man,—to my great astonishment he confessed his error, regretted the rashness of his conduct, and intreating me to forgive his offence, declared that my kindness and generosity had found their way to his heart, and that he should never do otherwise than love me all the remainder of his days. Need I say that I eagerly embraced my brave cousin's offers of friendship? I was delighted; my heart clave to the generous young sailor, and before he had quitted the sick-room, all unknown to him, I had settled upon him an annuity of two hundred a year.

All this would have been well enough if I could, in any way, have contrived to keep poor Ellen in ignorance of what had passed. But all my precautions were unavailing; she became acquainted with the truth; and the excitement attending upon this knowledge aggravated her disease to an alarming extent. It was evident to all who saw her that the crisis was rapidly approaching.

“Then there is no hope, Doctor,” I said; “no

glimmering of hope?" And there was a wildness in my manner, as I spoke, which betokened the intensity of my wretchedness.

"I do not say, Mr. Jerningham," replied —, in a kind voice, for he was a benevolent man; "I do not say that there is no hope: there is always hope. We must remove our patient, so that she may profit her to inhale the atmosphere of a milder climate, Mr. Jerningham."

"Right, right, Dr. —!" I gasped, my appearance resembling those of a condemned criminal, when he is first told that there is a chance of a reprieve. "Right; we must remove our patient, as you sayest,—a milder climate, Dr. —? Whither do we go? To Rome, Malta, Madeira? oh! anywhere in the world. I would go barefoot to the Antipodes, if I thought that I could save my wife."

"I would recommend Madeira," replied —; "the climate is in every respect suited to her, and the facility of communication between this island and ourselves is very great, as you know, Mr. Jerningham. You will be able to procure much better accommodation for an invalid in one of our large East-India merchantmen than in any other species of vessel, whatever part of the world they may be voyaging to. Besides, you will be entirely spared the inconvenience of all land-t

which, I need not tell you, is an inestimable advantage, when we consider the weakly state of our patient." And having said this, Dr. — rose from his seat, and was about to depart, when I withheld him.

I laid my hand upon the arm of the physician. "Stay, Doctor," I cried. "We *will* go to Madeira, — Ellen and I, and our children. We will start to-morrow, — to-day, — this very hour! We will all go together, and you shall come with us; yes, Doctor, indeed you must. I will take no excuse; for what can we do without you? we shall be as sheep without the shepherd. Doctor, you *must* come."

I was raving. I did not know what I said. My miseries had made me wild.

Dr. — spoke soothingly to me; but still I did nothing but cry, "Doctor, you *must* come with us; for what shall we do without you?"

At length I became more tranquil, and I began to marshal my ideas. "Look you, Doctor," I said, "you will have to give up your practice. True, but only for a while. Ellen, that is, Mrs. Jerningham, cannot be always, you see, in the state which she is in now. Come with us; she will either die or be cured before the end of a year: only keep her alive as long as you can, Doctor. For every day that she lives, you shall

have an hundred guineas. Thank God, I am
Oh, Doctor! do not shake your head. Well,
you shall have half my fortune,—two-t
What say you, Dr. —, to a hundred
sand down upon the nail?" And then I b
again to rave. My words came forth in
rently.

When I had recovered my tranquillity
ciently to understand what was said to me
— began quietly to point out the unreason
ness of the demand I had made upon him. "Jerningham," he said, "you must consider
this is by no means a matter of mercantile cal
tion. If I were merely to consult my own p
niary interests, avarice, no doubt, would temp
to leave my London practice for a season, an
follow you upon your voyage to Madeira. B
must be remembered, that whereas, by qui
England, I should only advantage one sol
family,—by remaining at home, I am of servi
hundreds; each of which looks upon my pres
as indispensable to their happiness as you
My duty leaves me no alternative; it is impos
that I should comply with your request.
must feel that it is so, and I am sure that
do." And Dr. — shook me kindly by
hand.

On the following morning, I visited the m

polis, that I might make the necessary arrangements for my projected voyage to Madeira. When in the city, I discovered, to my great joy, that a six hundred ton vessel (and ships of this burthen are generally the pleasantest sailers) belonging to Messrs. ——— and Co. was advertised to leave Gravesend in the course of a fortnight from that day. I went, therefore, immediately to the agent; and the ensuing dialogue passed between us :

“ Mr. ———,” I said, “ you have a vessel advertised—the *Lord Amherst*, bound for Calcutta,—to touch at Madeira and the Cape.”

“ We have, sir,”—and Mr. ——— bowed obsequiously,—“ a fine, fast-sailing, teak-built ship,—made her last voyage from Saugor in ninety-seven days, sir, though she was becalmed a week upon the line. I will show you a plan of her : perhaps you will oblige me by looking at this chart.” And Mr. ——— exhibited an engraving of something like the skeleton of a cock-roach, but which, in reality, was the ground-plan of his ship.

“ I am perfectly satisfied,” I replied, “ as to the excellence of your accommodations; and I should be tempted to close with you at once, were I not still involved in uncertainty upon a very material point of your naval economy, Mr. ———. Allow me to ask you one question; and remember

that I ask it in no light mood and in no casual manner. I expect to be answered candidly. Consider that your honour is implicated in the reply, which you are about to make to my query."

"Undoubtedly, sir. Honour and truth actuate me in all that I do." And Mr. ——— laid his hand upon his heart with the air of a Roman patriot, or of a candidate soliciting a vote.

"I see," said I, "that the *Lord Amherst* is advertised to carry an English cow and an experienced surgeon. Now, it happens that, in the course of my life, I have made three voyages between this and Calcutta, having been born in India, as you may guess, from the fact of my now being in England, and I have always found that the English cow is a better doctor than the experienced surgeon. You seem to be aware of this fact; for I see, by your advertisement, that you have given the priority to the English cow!"

If a thunderbolt had fallen at the feet of the ship-agent, he could not have looked more astonished. His mouth opened wide, his eyebrows arched themselves, the very scalp of his head was uplifted. He did not utter a word, for he thought that he was negotiating with a madman.

"I am quite serious," I continued; "and I request Mr. ——— to be the same. Tell me, is

your experienced surgeon more skilful than your English cow?"

"Than the cow, sir," replied Mr. ——. "He is really what the advertisement declares him to be. He is 'an experienced surgeon,' sir; he has made two voyages, and carries with him a box of testimonials, which he will exhibit if you doubt his qualifications. Besides this, sir, he has one of the best cases of surgical instruments I ever saw, and the owners of the vessel, sir, (I will show you the invoice) have just laid out the unprecedented sum of ten pounds fifteen shillings and eight-pence, upon drugs to furnish the medicine chest, all purchased at Apothecaries' Hall."

"Enough," I said; "the gentleman is a Scotchman."

"He is, sir,—his name is Mac Curdoch."

"He is a young man,—carries a snuff-box, and a head of vermillion hair."

"Of what, sir?"

"Of red hair," said I; for I was exceedingly well acquainted with this species of the *genus homo*.

"Precisely so," replied Mr. ——; "then you know him, sir,—a friend of yours, perhaps."

"Oh! dear no; I have not that honour,—it was a guess, sir, a mere guess upon my part;" then altering the tones of my voice, and assuming my

blandest aspect, I continued; "I believe, Mr. ——, that you are yourself a husband and a father."

"I am, sir,—my family live at Brixton. I shall be happy to introduce you at any time, No. 3, Paradise Row, sir; before you come to the hill."

I made a profound bow in acknowledgment of this compliment, and then resumed.

"I also am a father and a husband, Mr. ——; now place yourself in my situation, and tell me whether, if *your* wife were in a delicate state of health, you would entrust the safety of her body to the 'experienced surgeon' of the *Amherst*."

"As a father and a husband, sir, I answer, 'undoubtedly, yes';" and Mr. —— cast up his eyes as though he was reading something upon the ceiling.

Perhaps, Mr. ——, when he laid his hand upon his heart, and declared as an husband and a father, that he would entrust his own wife, were she diseased, to the medical supervision of Doctor Mac Curdoch, only meant to express the little reluctance with which he would, at any time, see his better half consigned, out of hand, to her coffin. This did not occur to me at the moment; but I have since had reason to suppose that Mr. —— was either very little uxorious as a husband or very little veracious as a man.

Short-sighted mortal that I was! What did I know of all those labyrinthine intricacies, which distinguish the policy of a man who has vegetated since his earliest adolescence, in the regions about Fenchurch Street?

A bargain, however, was struck. The cabins were engaged; the money agreed upon, was disbursed; every preparation was made for our voyage; an outfit provided for the party sufficient to last out a passage to China; and my poor suffering wife conveyed to Gravesend in one of Harman's patent invalid carriages.

We embarked,—oh! what a dreadful place is shipboard for a sick person! The never-ending noise, the confined air below decks, the coarse provisions, the insufficient supply of water, the utter absence of every comfort which distinguish the sick-chamber of a snug English home,—how do all these wretched things enhance the sufferings of the invalid. Add to this, the constant motion, the creaking bulk-heads, the reeling deck, the dripping timbers of a great ship in convulsions.

Reader, wilt thou follow me in imagination on board the good ship, *Lord Amherst*? We are now skirting the Bay of Biscay, for India-ships seldom do more than describe, as it were, the chord of the arc: the wind is favourable and precisely of that nature, which landsmen are wont to call a hurricane,

which mariners, in the gentle language of their craft, distinguish by no harder name than that of a 'steady breeze.'

Enter with me my cabin, sweet reader. I have two,—one of which is occupied by my female servants and my children, the other by Ellen and myself. They are the two stern cabins upon the lower deck, communicating by means of a door, established for my temporary convenience. Enter with me, reader, I beseech you, the cabin wherein I dwelt with my wife; its area is thirteen by twelve, and its altitude barely seven feet, dimensions which, however magnificent on board-ship, make but a sorry closet on shore. This little apartment is but poorly illuminated, for immense barricadoes of iron-inwoven wood, aptly designated *dead-lights*, have been let down before our stern windows, lest the mounting waves should feel an inclination to invade the sanctuary of our cabin: and now the only sun-grains which enter, stream through a sort of loop-hole in the vessel's side, which is called, and is about the size of, 'a bull's eye.' There is a chest of drawers at one extremity of this apartment, which, at every roll of the ship, seems to threaten a sudden expedition into the central regions of the cabin. There is a washing-stand, issuing from which you may hear a low, rumbling noise, as of some strange internal com-

motion ; there is a table, the drawer of which, being loose, protrudes itself, as though in a few moments, it would leap forth and unburthen itself of its miscellaneous contents. There is a chair, which has already most unfortunately dislocated one of its crural members, and which, as a last effort of ingenuity, I have been constrained to attach with a pocket handkerchief to the leg of my unsteady table, lest, tripod as it is, it should amuse itself with sundry saltatory excursions athwart the undulating floor of my cabin. There are several boxes skirting the walls of my closet, upon which the water, with a pleasant monotony, is distilled from the roof above, precisely as it is in one of those perennial shower-baths, called dropping wells, which I have visited in the north. The soda-water bottles, in the lockers, strike one another with a gentle dissonance : the strained timbers crack ; the waves buffet the sides of the vessel, as with a boxing-glove, and the bowels of our great wooden horse, are made to rumble from stem to stern. Nothing retains its equilibrium in my cabin, but the swinging tray, which, like a great mind in adversity, is unmoved by the turmoil of the surrounding elements, and fulfils its functions steadily as ever. Reader, you may smile at these things ; in description they may be ridiculous ; but, in reality, they are not to be arrided.

A sofa bed, very ingeniously-constructed, occupies no inconsiderable portion of our apartment, and the wasted form of my poor Ellen is stretched upon this couch. She might be comfortable, that our cabin is on the leeward side of the vessel, and her couch to the windward of the cabin; in other words, more intelligible to landsmen, the floor slopes from the bed of my wife, which is at the top of an inclined plane; so that the whole weight of poor Ellen, which, to be sure, is nothing very considerable, is thrown against the moving side of her sofa, which threatens every moment to give way, and to precipitate her against the opposite wall. In addition to this, the setting sun streams full upon her face, and dazzles her feeble eyes; — I append something before the light admitting aperture, and, behold! we are in total darkness.

Then I seat myself upon the sloping deck, and clinging with one arm to the sustaining couch, intertwine the fingers of the other within those of my sweet wife.

But all this was as nothing, in comparison with the feelings of horror which I experienced upon first conversing with the doctor of the *Amherst*. I must endeavour to describe this man:—He was, to all appearance, about eight-and-twenty years of age,—a gaunt, raw-boned animal, with a face

exceedingly ugly, that the very dogs barked at him as he passed. His hair, which was lank and parted in the centre, was plastered, with I know not what, upon either side of his head; the most consummate flattery could not say that the colour thereof was *sandy*,—it was, in fact, a bright scarlet, more decided than the national uniform. An incipient whisker of the same flaming hue skirted a cheek, whose superficies precisely resembled the skin upon a toad's belly, speckled, slimy, and nauseous to look upon. His eyes were large, lustreless things, like fishes' eyes after they have been boiled;—they looked as though they had never shed a tear, or glittered with one generous emotion. His mouth,—oh! call it not a mouth,—but rather a widely-gaping orifice cut in the lower regions of his face—was of the most appalling magnitude; it frightened one;—and when he laughed, for he was a merry monster, the effect was,—I have not words to describe it. Philologists have made no provision against such an emergency as this.

Charity guide my pen! I would not be too harsh upon this incondite thing of clay,—this crude mass of Adamite mortality,—this unfinished job of Dame Nature's, set adrift, like an image from the sculptor's hand, which has only just begun to assume the form and semblance of humanity.—Heaven help him! His gaunt carcase was encased

in a blue camlet jacket, and a pair of *soi-disant* white trowsers, which were the colour and texture of the main-sail. A black ribband, about an inch wide, and twisted into a sort of rude bow, performed, though very inefficiently, the vicarious duties of a neck-cloth; whilst, surmounting this, the collars of a striped blue-and-white shirt, warranted to keep clean a fortnight, were turned down so as to expose a throat, which always looked as though something were sticking in it, much larger than the slice of the apple, which makes the *pomum Adami* in man. Add to this elegant costume, a pair of prodigious leather cases, which had no legitimate right to the title of *shoes*, looking, for all the world as they did, like a couple of portmantaus, or bullock trunks, and you will be able, though indistinctly, I confess, to picture to yourself this nondescript animal,—this monster, half a fish and half a man,—this ‘experienced surgeon’ of the *Amherst*.

To speak candidly, though, the doctor of a ship is at all times an unfortunate creature. The officers will not own him as one of their fraternity, and the passengers will have nothing to say to him. He resembles a wretch who has escaped hanging, by turning king’s evidence against an accomplice;—he has become an outcast alike from the society of knaves and honest men.

But this Dr. Mac Curdoch was, in reality, something monstrous. I have *spared* him,—I have abstained from crucifying him, in the account which I have just set before the reader. But I have, as yet, only spoken of the outer man,—the shell, the husk, as it were, of Dr. Mac Curdoch. And is not that enough?—What ray of intellect could be expected to flash from such a Caliban?

I went up to address him. I thought as I went of Æsop, Tyrtæus, and of Socrates, who, according to Plato, resembled “the apothecaries’ gallypots, which had on the outside apes, owls, and satyrs, but within precious ointment.” Yet all this was of no avail; neither Æsop, nor Tyrtæus, nor Socrates ever looked as did Doctor Mac Curdoch.

I spoke to him. “Of course, Doctor,” I said, “you are intimately acquainted with the nature and treatment of *tuberculous cachexia*.”

“Of what, surr?” Oh! that villanous Caledonian twang,—even now it is harshly grating upon my ears.

“Of tu-ber-cu-lous ca-chex-i-a,” said I, articulating my words very slowly. The Doctor stared at me.—It was all heathen Greek to the ‘experienced surgeon’ of the *Amherst*. My heart died within me.

“In plain English, then, Doctor,” I continued,

with the most exemplary calmness, "do you know how to cure a person in the last stage of a consumption?"

"Yes, surr," replied the Doctor, his embarrassment rendering him somewhat laconic.

"Hark you, Doctor.—In the most advanced state of the disease, when the *dyspnœa* or difficulty of breathing is very oppressing, as you know it often is, what remedy would you recommend to be employed, as most productive of relief to the sufferer?"

If the Doctor had been undergoing an examination before the whole College of Surgeons, he could not have been more perplexed than he was by this simple query.

"Well, Doctor," and I looked at him so truculently, that the poor man began to alarm himself.

At length he stammered out, "I would caution the patient to lie still, surr, and to keep his head in an erect position."

"Thank you, Doctor, and now you would very much oblige me, by trying whether you can find in your medicine chest a small quantity of æther, and some opium," and having said this, we descended the companion-ladder, that we might explore the said medicine-chest together.

There never was a more egregious popular fallacy, than that death by consumption is mild and

easy, a gradual and imperceptible wasting away, as it were, attended with little pain and few harassing concomitants. It is, indeed, anything but this ; the victim of consumption, as all can testify who have watched, like me, beside the couch, day and night, of a tuberculous patient, experiences in every stage of the disease, and, especially, in its most advanced one, a variety of the most distressing sensations, accompanied frequently with acute bodily pain, and a most hopeless state of mental despondency. My poor Ellen ! thy sufferings, indeed, were many and very great.

The wearisome and never-ending cough, which ceased not day or night to torment her—the icy chills which, morning and evening, succeeded the deadly perspirations, making her feel as though her whole body were immersed in frozen water—the distressing difficulty of respiration, which was productive of a stifling sense, as though an incubus had been sitting upon her bosom—the lassitude—the labefaction, if I may use such a word, of all physical power—the deficient circulation exhibiting itself in the œdematous, or swollen, state of the debilitated sufferer's limbs—all combined to render my poor Ellen so miserable, that life must have been a burthen to her, and the grave a resting-place fondly to be desired ; and yet I am confident that her sufferings were light, in comparison with mine.

But I did not entirely despair of Ellen's ultimate recovery ; the lamp of my hope burned dimly, but it was not altogether extinguished ; I thought it just probable, that if she were to survive the voyage, (and a voyage to Madeira is generally performed in about twelve or fourteen days,) the warm sun, and the mild air of our new residence, might check the advances of her disease, and delay, if not wholly avert, the dreaded termination of her malady.

For several days our good ship moved onwards with a rapidity almost unprecedented, and the progress which we made fully compensated for the uneasy motion of the vessel, which was extremely harassing to my poor invalid, whose natural timidity was augmented by the morbid condition of her system. We passed the Bay of Biscay, and then,—oh, most dire of calamities!—*we were becalmed.*

This was a death-blow to my hopes ; there was nothing to compensate for this misfortune ; the vessel continued to roll tremendously, for there was a long, heavy swell, which often renders the motion of a becalmed ship even more annoying than that of one in a gale. There was now neither windward nor leeward, first on one side, and then on the other, the vessel slowly and monotonously rolled over, drenching the very

scuppers, and never righting herself for a moment. Oh ! the miseries of a calm at sea, with a long, heavy swell.

The only person in the ship, who never once complained, was Ellen ; how beautiful was her patience !—how angelic the love which forbade her to murmur, lest her murmurings might increase my unhappiness ! With a gentle violence against truth, pardonable, if ever falsehood is to be pardoned, she would tell me that she felt quite easy, when I could see plainly enough that the most miserable sensations were afflicting her. Then, when she saw that I was sad, she would exert herself to sustain my drooping spirits, and to revivify my failing hopes, by talking, in a joyous strain, of what she would do in Madeira, intimating thereby, a full assurance, which she did not feel, of an ultimate recovery, and endeavouring to cause my despairing soul to sympathize with her sanguine temper, by defrauding me into a belief which I could not encourage, of its reality. What power and lastingness is there in a woman's unerring affection ! Hope and joy may become extinct in her heart, even virtue may be crushed by circumstances, but love survives, and is often brightest when it shines amidst the ashes of its handmaidens.

Sometimes, but this was not often allowed, I

would suffer Ellen for a few moments to see our little child. This was her greatest joy, the absence of the infant, her greatest deprivation; but she saw the wisdom of the restriction I placed upon her, and the necessity of implicitly conforming to it. I have seen her when the cry of an infant smote upon her ear from the next cabin, start suddenly up, as though she were going to spring from her couch; and then merely saying "I forgot," sink back exhausted upon her pillow. She knew which was her own child's voice, and which was the poor little orphan Claudine's; but indeed, she loved them both with a mother's love, and I was as a father to the twain.

Upon the third day of the calm, I saw with horror that my poor wife's disease was wearing a more alarming aspect than it had hitherto exhibited. She appeared to suffer intense pains; she lay restlessly upon her couch, changing her position almost every five minutes, and drawing her legs now and then as though the lower regions of her stomach were being acted upon by spasmodic affection. There was a constant flow of saliva from her lips; and her whole countenance had assumed an appearance which I had never before seen. I spoke to her: "Ellen," I said, "do you suffer much this evening, my love? Do not

withhold the truth from me, for perhaps I might do something to relieve you."

She answered not, and I reiterated the question. At length she confessed that she was in great pain, and added—"That powder, my dear Claude; what was it that you gave me this morning? it is tearing me,—a small white powder, which—; but I shall soon be better: do not distress yourself, my love."

I was horror-struck; a terrible suspicion flashed across my brain, as I said—"That powder,—why, Ellen, it was your emetic. It was nothing but ipecacuanha and a single grain of tartarized antimony; and yet,—do you know where the wrapper is from which the powder was taken?"

"I think that is it," said Ellen, pointing to a scrap of blue paper lying at my feet upon the floor.

I picked it up; there were still some grains of the white powder clinging to it; I went forth to seek the Doctor.

I found him in his cabin. He was asleep; for the monster had just dined.

I aroused him. "Doctor," I said, "you remember that yesterday evening, about this time, I came to you for some ipecacuanha, and that you went to the medicine-chest and gave it to me."

“Yes, surr,” replied the Doctor, rubbing his sleepy eyes as he spoke.

“Will you be so good,” I continued, “as to tell me what this paper has contained? you will see that there are some grains of the powder still clinging to it, Doctor.”

He took the paper, and thrusting out an enormous tongue, about the size and colour of an ox’s, he licked off all the powder that remained upon the envelope, and then withdrawing his elocutionary organ, he smacked his lips once or twice, and exclaimed, “Of a surety, Mr. Jerningham, this paper has held *calomel*.”

“*Calomel!*” and in a moment my hand was upon the uncovered throat of the Surgeon.

But I restrained myself. The Doctor drew back. “There was an insect upon your collar,” I said; and I pretended to brush something off.

The man thanked me; and I continued. “But surely this cannot be; you could not commit such an error as to give out calomel instead of ipecacuanha.”

“I doant know,” replied the Doctor,—“it was dark, Surr, and accidents will happen. They’ve put the medicine-chest somehow or other in the darkest corner of the ship.”

It was with the greatest possible difficulty that I refrained from leaping upon this man,—from

dashing him to the earth and stamping upon him. But I withheld myself, although he had signed the death-warrant of my wife.

Dr. ——'s last parting admonition had been,—
“No mercury, Mr. Jerningham; if you exhibit mercury you will kill her. Mrs. Jerningham's constitution is a peculiar one; it is to the last degree nervous and irritable. Three grains of calomel, in her present state, would be certain death.”

And now these words were remembered with a terrible distinctness. Already I heard the death-rattle gurgling in the throat of my wife. My head swam round; I tottered towards the door. A sensation of sickness came over me; I was opposite the main-hatchway; mechanically I ascended the ladder, and presently I stood upon the deck.

The Doctor followed me; he came up to recommend an emetic to my wife. His voice exasperated me almost to madness. “Go,” I cried, “for God's sake, go; or you will tempt me;” and I pointed to the wave.

The man sneaked away, like a beaten hound, and I returned to my wife's cabin. I framed a plausible story to tranquillize her distressed mind, and seating myself beside her, I endeavoured to appear unwontedly gay, because I was unwontedly wretched.

The sun was just sinking into the ocean ; and at every roll of the vessel, which brought our scuttle upon a level with the horizon, the departing light streamed into the cabin for a few moments, and then all again was dim, until the next heavy roll once more lowered our side of the rocking vessel. I observed that Ellen turned her face towards the scuttle, and seemed to watch with a curious eye, the gradual descent of the ship's side, every time that it lowered itself towards the sea ; she was watching the sun go down, and a placid smile was playing faintly upon her mild, waxy face.

Again the scuttle of our cabin was brought, in its regular cadence, upon a level with the horizon, and again Ellen watched its descent, but this time no sun-grains entered, and the smile died away from the placid countenance of my wife. " Gone," she said,—“ gone for ever ; I have seen it for the last time.”

Night came on, and I took my station by the bed-side of the sufferer. I sate at the head of my wife's couch, in an arm chair, which I had lashed securely to the deck ; for I always slept there, whenever I did sleep, which was more frequently by day than by night. I was very sad ; the most terrible forebodings had taken possession of my

soul; yet I spake cheerfully; words of comfort now issued from *my* lips.

"I wish that you would read to me," said Ellen, and she extended her thin white hand, which could scarcely lift the pocket-bible, which she put into mine, as she spoke. "I wish you would read that story about the man of God and the Shunamite widow. I am fanciful; I know not why, but I desire to hear this chapter more than any other in the book."

Then I did as Ellen desired me to do, and I read the fourth chapter of the second book of Kings.

When I had ceased reading, Ellen closed her eyes, for they were heavy, and she seemed desirous of sleep; so I spake not; I even held my breath, lest I might disturb her; and I sate motionless as a statue. There was not a sound to be heard but the creaking of the bulk-heads. The passengers were all asleep, and the mariners were inactive upon deck, for there was not a breath of wind stirring sufficient to uplift a feather.

She slept, and I watched over her. How painful were those vigils. What a multitude of distressing thoughts flitted across my brain. All the many varied events of the last few years passed before the mirror of my retrospection. I thought

of the time when I last traversed the great world, full of hope and joy, an exile re-seeking his home with a bounding heart and a sunny aspect ; and the past, the memory of which was laden with sorrow. Then I thought of my uncle Matthew and of Everard Sinclair, and how they had both been in my presence,—those two good men ; the one “ full of days, riches, and honour,”—the other the very flower of his manhood,—in the summer of his life. Then Margaret de L. entered into my thoughts, and the days of my first love were remembered with feelings of joy and sorrow commingled, for the memory of buried happiness is indeed painfully sweet ; and then dark images rose up, so terrible to look back upon. I tried to dispel them,—broken faith and broken hatred,—malice ending in remorse,—despair ending in madness. I tried to dispel these visions of a too eventful past, but in vain, I durst not look forward ; “ that way madness lies.”

Then I endeavoured to fix my retrospective thoughts upon the days of my early boyhood, when grief was a stranger to my young heart, and the hopes, which are now grown grey, were only in their childhood. But when I thought of these blissful scenes, I thought also of Ellen, and what she had been in her young days,—of

she might have been, had not the promise of the tender flower been blasted by the unnatural frost of a brutish husband's austerity. I thought of her angelic nature,—of her saint-like patience,—of her love, pure, deep, and inexhaustible, as the waters of a spring-fed well. And then bitter feelings of remorse and self-contempt took possession of my soul. I hated myself; I sickened to the death when I thought of my utter unworthiness.

At length I slept. It was past midnight when my eyelids drooped, and a sudden drowsiness, which I could not resist, came over me. I did not feel a gradual torpor stealing slowly over my senses, or I should have struggled against it; but oblivion came upon me, like a thief in the night, giving no warning of its approach. I was exhausted,—worn out with long watchings, and the weakness of my nature had given way. I slept; an unbroken, dreamless, heavy, death-like sleep wrapped me round about, as with a shroud. When I awoke, it was as though I were awakening from a trance. I knew not how long I might have slept.

Our cabin was almost dark; the swinging lamp, which I hung up every night, was upon the point of expiring, and sent forth at intervals a few fitful and irregular bursts of light, which but partially illuminated the room. The day was just beginning

to break, but very little of the external light entered our gloomy apartment.

I was about to rise from my chair, that I might replenish the dying lamp, when I felt a cold touch on one of my hands, and an indescribable chill crept over me. I tried to withdraw my hand, and, in doing so, I found that it was clasped, as it were, between two pieces of ice. In fact, the fingers of one of my wife's hands were intertwined with my own. A terrible apprehension seized me. I forcibly extricated my hand, and mechanically I felt for my wife's pulse—but I *did not find it*. "Ellen," I cried; but no answer returned.

I started up, and, bending over my wife, I raised my head, and inclined my ear, that I might catch the sound of her breathing; but I heard nothing. Then I lifted up my voice and cried, "Ellen, my love, why answerest thou not?" All was still.

Then I took down the lamp, and endeavored to revivify the expiring flame; but my hand trembled like the hand of a paralytic, and the lamp fell from the deck, breaking the silence with a ringing which startled me. It was quite dark.

I groped about for the fallen lamp, and, after a while, I lifted it up. Then I went into the sleeping cabin, where my children slept, and I

re-illumine it; but I could not, for the wick had fallen out; so I took the lamp which belonged to the other cabin.

I passed by the little cot, whereupon my infant was lying. I bent down and kissed its cheek, and whispered into its ear, "Thou art motherless." But it heard me not, for it was fast asleep.

Then I re-entered my cabin, and held the lamp over the couch of my wife. The light streamed full upon the waxen face of a corpse. There was no mistaking what I saw then. She had flung herself half out of bed, in a last expiring effort to die in her husband's arms. Oh, God! and I had slept all this while.

CHAPTER XIII.

Dead for my life—

E'en so,—my tale is told.

SHAKESPEARE.

I know not what passed after this. I have a confused recollection of a multitude of things, but I remember little distinctly. Morning dawned upon me, and I was stretched upon the floor of my cabin. I must have lain there, for some time, howling, delirious, incapable of exertion. Somebody disturbed me, and I imagine that I went then upon deck. A number of cold, unfeeling faces were staring at me; I was an object of universal curiosity; but I cared not, for I was like a man in a sleep. One face was kinder than the rest; it was the face of the captain; he addressed me. He said something,—I know not what,—I

made no answer, but stared at him wildly; then I believe that I re-entered my cabin, and here I remember something distinctly.

The dull, leaden face of the doctor,—my God!—how I sickened at the sight,—the lank, red, plaster-woven hair,—the uncovered neck of the animal,—horrible! and those large corpse-like eyes, they glared upon me; the monster! and he spoke. He dared to remonstrate with me: he mentioned the name of my *wife*,—and then I leaped upon him with a loud cry; I seized him by the throat; I tightened my grasp,—and then there was a struggle; a heavy fall; another struggle,—a fearful one upon the ground.

Again all was obscurity. I saw nothing, I heard nothing for a while. When I recovered myself I was lying prostrate upon the deck; there was blood upon my face and hands. I rose up and rushed towards my cabin-door; they had locked it, but I was not to be baulked. I flung myself against it with a shout,—a terrible shout of defiance; it gave way, like gossamer, before me. I was armed with supernatural vigour, and once more, I stood upon the deck.

I looked around; but the faces that had stared at me, were gone. I stood alone, as I thought, upon the waters; but a noise came from the after-part of the vessel; I turned round, and the passengers were *at breakfast*. Horrible; to eat, to

drink, and to laugh, a
tures ; like one stretching
the agonies of the dam

A servant came up
and there was kindness
I stared at him ; I laugh
ay, food ! do you say ?
for the worms."

Then another sound
a harsh, grating sound
carpenter sawing a pl
old man, with long, silv
full of benevolence. I
was about ; he was ma
shape something like a
he worked with an eye
I asked him what he w
for what the box was in

The old man laid do
me sorrowfully, but he
drop was rolling down
ther-beaten face ; he r
away the tear, then r
his work. Oh, agony

Meteor-like, the wh
I became suddenly ali
wretchedness. I awak
and there I stood, calm

contemplating a world of desolation. And Ellen,—my poor Ellen, she was dead; and I was her murderer.

I seated myself upon a gun-carriage,—or, rather, I sunk down, for I had not the power to stand up. I bowed down my head; I hid my face between my hands, and for the first time since my departure, I wept.

Ellen,—my poor Ellen!—alas, with what a terrible distinctness all her sufferings rushed upon my mind. Desolation is no casuist. I looked not for one redeeming point to extenuate the brutality of my conduct. I might have looked in vain, for I should have found none. But now every circumstance of my guilt rose up against me with exaggerated virulence. I looked upon myself as a monster of iniquity, deserving neither the compassion of man, nor the mercy of the all-merciful God. In proportion as my own vices became aggravated in my mind, the virtues of my poor wife assumed almost an angelic appearance. Her meekness, her endurance, her gentleness, and, above all, her unswerving attachment towards myself,—her affection, which, though trampled upon, had not been crushed,—which, though despised and insulted, and unrequited, had survived the rude shock of my cruelty. I remembered all her words, all her actions, all her

looks, and every new reminiscence of her kindness, like a barbed arrow, entered my soul. The more I reflected on what she had done, the more entirely convinced I was of her faultlessness. I remembered a multitude of gentle offices she had done for me, which, albeit, disregarded at the time, were now fully appreciated. Every unkind word I had spoken,—every ungrateful repulse,—every frown that I had returned to her smiles,—rose up, like spectres, from the grave of the past, to reproach me with the heinousness of my offences. I threaded the labyrinth of my crimes, and at every turn my sufferings were increased. I was without hope, without comfort. Blank, cheerless, desolate were my prospects.

I wept,—I know not how long. If I may judge by the multiplicity of ideas which had crowded distractingly upon my brain, I had sat long upon that gun-carriage in tears; but I took no note of the hours as they passed. Though I had been sitting within a few yards of the great bell, which was used to mark the divisions of time, I was unconscious of having heard it strike, so wholly was I absorbed with my grief. But at length I was disturbed by feeling a hand gently laid upon my shoulder. A few hours before this, and I should have sprung at the throat of that man who dared to lay a hand upon me, though in kindness; but

now my heart was softened ; gentle was I, and placable as a lamb. I was rational too, most miserably rational, for reason had returned but to torture me.

I looked up, and the captain stood beside me ; there was sorrow expressed upon his countenance. I passed my hand hurriedly across my eyes, and wiped away the tears that were swimming there. I endeavoured to look calm. The skipper began to address me ; he apologised first of all for his intrusion ; I shook him by the hand and he proceeded :—

It was his object, he said, with reference to the melancholy event that had just occurred, to meet my wishes as nearly as possible. He alluded to the disposal of the corpse. He said, that although we were not far from Madeira, the obstinate calm which encircled us, might delay our arrival he knew not how long. He was aware, that with some people, there was a prejudice against committing a beloved body to the waves. For his part, he saw not the objection, but other people must judge for themselves. He wished to know my ideas upon the subject. He hinted at the superstitions of the crew : if the voyage should turn out unfortunate, it would be imputed to the detention of the corpse : it was always a subject of complaint, however ridiculous it might be. Be-

sides, the weather was unusually sultry, and contagion might be engendered below. However, he left it to my decision, and concluded by exhorting me to be calm.

"Calm," said I; "you tell me to be calm; I never was calmer in my life;" and I tortured my features into a smile. "Yes, I am so calm you see, that I can look cheerful. Yes, captain, you hear that I can laugh. We must all die you know; ha, ha, ha!—I perfectly understand you, my dear sir. The sailors,—I honour their superstitions, and the calm, sir; I allude to the sea,—but the ocean itself is not calmer than I am. I perfectly coincide with you, captain. I can see no mare's tails in the sky; so you had better commit the body to the waves. There is something in the funeral service, I think, about the 'deep giving up its dead!' Are there any sharks in these latitudes, captain?"—and then I shuddered; I could utter no more; again I bowed my head down even to my knees, and again the tears fell thick and heavy, like the large drops of a thunder shower in April.

Then, after a while, I rose up; and hurriedly paced the deck for a few minutes; I observed that every one gave way to me, and this called me suddenly to my recollection. I desired to be alone in my sorrow, so I went down again to my cabin.

As I entered, they were screwing down the coffin-lid ; there stood the carpenter with his instruments in his hand, and beside him was the chief officer. I besought them in language which must have wrung their hearts to leave me alone with the dead ; and they quitted the cabin together.

“ My poor Ellen ! what a beautiful corpse she is. How unutterably placid is her countenance ! She died with a smile upon her face. What serenity is there in her aspect ; she looks like a fair statue of peace on the monument of some good woman. Ah ! and those long, yellow, locks,—they shall not go down with thee to the depths of the glaucous ocean. There, kiss me, Ellen ; how chilly your lips are, my love ; why do you not speak to me ?—Fool ; fool !—she is dead, and behold ! I am conversing with her.

“ There ; lift up your head, Ellen,—thus, that is well, my beloved,—those beautiful long, yellow locks,—so soft, so luxuriant, so golden,—they shall not perish with thee,—what, more still ? Why nature is no churl, I am sure.”

And one by one I severed the fair locks of my wife from the beautiful head they had shrouded. I thrust them into my bosom. I covered up the corpse. I replaced the lid of the coffin, and again I lay down beside it. Nature was exhausted with

watching and long sufferings, and in the all my sorrows I slept.

When I awoke, to my indescribable horror I found that the coffin had been removed. I thought they had committed it to the deep and I had been sleeping all the while. To die, and to be also, and I asleep—there was agony of thought. I started up; I listened, for I heard a noise—a loud noise at long intervals repeated—was the tolling of a bell. Slowly and solemnly it pealed; there was no mistaking its import; the death-knell of my poor Ellen—a voice summoning the crew to attend at the funeral of the beloved.

I ascended the companion ladder. I was internally sensible that a great change had taken place since last I stood upon the deck; a breeze had sprung up from the northward, and the vessel was moving briskly along. The bell ceased to toll just as I reached the summit of the ladder.

The people had gathered round the lee side of the ship. The passengers stood upon one side, the crew upon the other, in the centre was the captain with his book. All were uncovered. A barge lay alongside on the deck, beside the open gangway—not black, there was nothing of mourning but a thing gay and many-coloured—the *jack*, which covered the rude coffin of one so

yet cold. And had they no better pall than this for my poor Ellen?

I did not advance, I stood behind the capstan and rested my elbows thereupon. Then I looked around me, and I beheld a number of pitiless, unsorrowful faces. Not a tear was shed; not a brow was clouded. The eyes of only one man glistened, and that man was the carpenter. The doctor was not there to witness the completion of his handy-work.

The captain began to read. His voice was deep, full-toned, and impressive,—“I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”

* * * *

“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.”

And a voice from behind the assemblage of the people—a voice whose tones were even as those which sorrow wrings from a breaking heart—a voice bursting forth from a heaving bosom, like a long drawn sigh of mighty emotion—a voice, when the prayer was ended, was heard to answer, “AMEN!”

And the face of every man was turned round to discern whence the voice proceeded, and they beheld me looking towards the sea.

Then the captain proceeded with the funeral service; and I shrouded my eyes with my hands. My elbows still rested upon the capstan. The full-toned voice of the preacher continued to strike upon my ears; but I distinguished not the words that were uttered. I was wrapped up in a lethargy of grief—stupified, senseless, chaotic—would that I had remained so for ever,—but I heard *a splash in the waters*, and my agony suddenly awoke.

“No; no—not yet,”—I cried aloud,—“not yet, ---and is she really gone? gone for ever—then I will go with her,”—and I rushed vehemently through the crowd, that I might cast myself in the waters, but one stronger than I laid his hand upon my shoulder and restrained me.

Then I went away gnashing my teeth: but still I turned my face towards the sea. They had not put lead enough in the coffin. I saw it tossing about.

The company dispersed smiling, talking one to another, as though nothing had happened. Several ascended the poop, watching and pointing at the coffin as it mounted the waves right astern, now hidden in a valley of water, now appearing upon the crest of a breaker. It was an amusing sight to the idle party—it was something to look at and speculate upon. But this was nothing—the crown-

ing curse of all was yet in store for my afflicted soul. I heard the sound of a shot; I looked up, and a young cadet had just discharged a pistol from the quarter. He was laughing. Perhaps I was in error, but I thought, and I think so still, that he fired at my wife's coffin.

Human endurance could hold out no longer. I would have killed the boy had he been within my reach. I clenched both my fists; I made a spring forward; but darkness came suddenly upon me; and my brain whirled giddily round. I was impotent; I staggered forward and struck out with all my might, but my victim was far enough from me. Then I fell flat upon my face and was taken up in a delirious fever.

POSTSCRIPT.

Jamque opus exegi.

“BUT, surely,” exclaims the beneficent reader, who has followed the autobiographer thus far, “it is not your intention, Mr. Author, to take your leave of us in this abrupt manner? You have not told us what becomes of Frederick, nor of Margaret, nor, indeed, of yourself? Come, sir, ——”

“Romantically situated upon the borders of the river * * *, whose waters ——”

“I must tell you, Mr. Author, that this sounds a great deal more like the beginning of an initial, than of a final, chapter; besides, when we last heard of you, you were upon your way to the island of Madeira. You fell flat upon your face, and were taken up in a delirious fever.”

So I did, but seven long years have passed away since the date of that event, and the autobiographer——; but the perusal of the following little scene will, peradventure, satisfy thy laudable curiosity, my most beneficent reader.

Beside a table, covered with books and papers, in a well-stored library, whose glass-doors open upon a shaven lawn, down-sloping towards a river, which wanders through one of our most beautiful northern counties, sits a gentleman, whose precise age it would be somewhat difficult to determine. He has been writing, but the ink has dried in his pen, and the paper which is stretched out before him, half blank and half manuscript as it is, seems blistered as though some tear-drops had lately fallen upon its surface. "And now," he mutters to himself, "I have finished—I have completed my task! What more does it behove me to write? What——."

But he pauses suddenly—the door of his apartment is heard to open, and he lifts up his bowed head—he looks towards the door—there is a smile upon his face, for two lovely children have burst into the room.

They look like twins, for they both of them have lived about eight years in the world, and they both have yellow locks, and they both have blue eyes, and they both are exceeding fair, so fair, that

seeing them, you would exclaim—"Such delicate buds as these will not live to become full-blown flowers." But they are not twins, neither are they brother and sister, for the one is like *his* mother, and the other like *her* sire. That mother and that sire are dead.

They come bounding up to the gentleman who sits beside the table in the library, but the little girl outstrips her companion, and is the first to throw her arms about the gentleman's knees.—"Papa," she cries, "dear papa, is it not very cruel to catch butterflies, and to kill them when they are caught?"

But ere she has elicited a reply to the question thus earnestly advanced, the little boy, whose countenance betrays a strong feeling of anger and resentment, whilst his young eyes flash, and his fair cheeks are crimsoned, cries out, "He is not *your* papa! What right have you to call him by that name?" And then the little girl falls a-weeping, and says, through her tears, "Oh, Everard—dear Everard, this is very unkind!" and then she hides her face between her little hands, and sobs violently.

The gentleman at the library-table endeavours to say something, but he cannot; a rush of feeling seems to stifle his utterance; the little boy looks at his young companion, and a change

passes over his countenance; resentment gives place to sorrow; anger to love; the tears glisten in his eyes; he throws himself upon the neck of the little girl.—“ Claudine! *sister* Claudine—my own sister!—I am a very wicked boy.”

Then they kiss one another, and the gentleman embraces them both—that gentleman, need I tell thee, sweet reader?—that gentleman is Claude Jerningham.

The little girl smiles through her tears, and says—“ Never mind, Everard;” then she seizes one of Mr. Jerningham’s hands, kisses it, and then looking up beseechingly into his face, exclaims in an earnest voice—“ Tell me about my papa?”

Then, scarcely knowing what to answer, I reply, — “ It is written in a book.”

But a servant enters, and relieves me from this embarrassment: he brings a letter with a foreign post-mark; I open it — “ Come hither, Everard, and you Claudine, I have good news to tell you: uncle Frederick is coming to England.”

“ And aunt Margaret?”

“ Yes, and your cousins.”

“ What, Matthew and Claude, and little Frederick?” cries my sweet boy, clapping his hands, whilst his face becomes radiant with joy. “ How I do long to see them, to be sure! What a pleasant party we shall have!”

“Is uncle Frederick a good man?” says the daughter of Everard Sinclair, “a good man like what my papa was?” and this question, innocently as it was advanced, smites painfully:—I know not what to say.

The question is repeated, and I answer, “Yes, child, he is a good man.”

“And aunt Margaret,” says Everard, “is she quite well again, papa?”

“Quite.”

Now, reader, art thou satisfied?

THE END.













